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SIOUX BURIAL MOUND, WITH RECENT OJIBWAY GRAVES

Mille Lac, Minn., May 20, 1900

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SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY
BULLETIN 83

BURIALS OF THE ALGONQUIAN, SIOUAN AND CADDOAN TRIBES WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI

BY

DAVID I. BUSHNELL, JR.

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION,
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY,
Washington, D. C., October 10, 1924.

SIR: I have the honor to submit herewith the accompanying manuscript, entitled "Burials of the Algonquian, Siouan, and Caddoan Tribes West of the Mississippi," by David I. Bushnell, jr., and to recommend its publication as a bulletin of the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Very respectfully,

J. WALTER FEWKES,
Chief.

Dr. CHARLES D. WALCOTT,
Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

PREFACE

Within historic times tribes belonging to three great linguistic families dominated the greater part of the country westward from the Mississippi to the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and far northward from the valley of Red River, La., into British possessions. Their villages were widely scattered and many were standing within a century, evidently preserving the same characteristic features unchanged through generations. But the villages of the people of different parts of the region varied in form and appearance. The manners and customs of a tribe, combined with the influence exerted by their natural environment, resulted in the development of the several types of habitations, and the same causes made it necessary for them to adopt various ways of disposing of their dead, as will be described in the following pages.

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BURIALS OF THE ALGONQUIAN, SIOUAN, AND CADDOAN TRIBES WEST OF THE MISSISSIPPI

By David I. Bushnell, Jr.

THE HABITAT OF THE THREE GROUPS

The Algonquian, Siouan, and Caddoan tribes, whose burial customs form the subject of this sketch, once dominated the entire valley of the Missouri and the adjacent regions far north and south. At that time the endless prairies, claimed as their hunting grounds by the many tribes, were roamed over by the millions of buffalo which served to attract the native hunters from the widely scattered villages. This is now a rich section of the United States, with many cities and towns the population of any one of which is far greater than was that of the entire region a few generations ago. The primitive camps and villages of these tribes, with their various types of habitations and other structures, have already been described by the writer (Bushnell, (1)), and at this time the burial customs of the same people will be considered.

Unfortunately the various travelers and explorers who traversed the country included in this sketch, and who must necessarily have come in contact with the native tribes, did not leave any very clear or specific accounts of the ceremonies enacted by the people at the time of the burial of their dead. It may be assumed, however, that such ceremonies were seldom witnessed by white men, especially by any who would or could have left written descriptions of the transactions, but there is reason to believe the rites were usually quite simple.

The nature of the country in which a tribe lived, whether broken and mountainous, a rolling open prairie, or densely timbered, with lakes and streams, exerted the greatest influence on the ways of life of the people, which in time became their fixed customs. And by reason of their natural environment different groups of tribes were led to adopt certain distinct methods of disposing of their dead. This is clearly demonstrated by the stone-inclosed burials of the Osage found on many rocky cliffs in the region south of the Mis-

souri, by the high scaffold burials of the tribes who frequented the plains, and by the log-covered graves of the people of the lake and forest country beyond the headwaters of the Mississippi.

In describing the burial customs of the tribes of the three stocks they will be discussed in the same sequence as was observed when referring to their villages, in the work mentioned above. However, it is to be regretted that no specific references to the burial customs of certain tribes have been discovered in the many journals and narratives examined.

ALGONQUIAN TRIBES

The Algonquian tribes were the northernmost of the three groups certain of whose customs are to be described at this time. True, a great majority of the tribes of this stock, the most numerous linguistic family in North America, lived eastward from the Mississippi and their burial customs have already been discussed (Bushnell, (2)), but others occupied large areas west of the river, and many of the latter retained their primitive manners and ways of life until recent times, little influenced by contact with Europeans.

Within the past two centuries many of the Algonquian tribes have removed from their earlier habitat, some advancing before the encroaching settlements of the whites, others seeking better hunting grounds. Two centuries ago the region about the headwaters of the Mississippi was occupied by the Dakota tribes, soon to be driven to the south and west by their inveterate enemies, the Ojibway, who continued to hold the country where game was so abundant and where the lakes and streams teemed with fish, all so easily secured for food.

The Algonquian tribes to be mentioned on the following pages include the Ojibway or Sauteux; the Cree; and the Cheyenne, Blackfoot, and Arapaho, the three usually being considered as constituting the western division of the stock. In addition to the preceding we shall also refer to the Sauk and Foxes, and others who crossed the Mississippi within recent times.

Ojibway, or Sauteux

The Ojibway, one of the largest native tribes of North America, when first encountered by the French missionaries early in the seventeenth century, lived along the timbered shores of Lake Huron and Lake Superior, quite remote from the region occupied by Europeans for more than a hundred years. Later, having obtained firearms from the traders, they were enabled to attack the neighboring tribes with greater success, and gradually they pushed westward across the present State of Minnesota to the Valley of Red River and beyond.

At the beginning of the last century the old North-West Co. had trading posts in that part of the country, and Peter Grant was for some years at the head of the Red River department of the company. He was a careful observer, as indicated by his writings, and fortunately about the year 1804 prepared a most valuable account of the manners and ways of life of the Sauteux, whose camps were then scattered through the valley and who traded at his company's posts. In describing the ceremonies which attended death and burial he wrote: "It is very singular that they seldom impute sickness to any natural cause, but, on the contrary, imagine that some person has bewitched them, or thrown bad medicines in their way.

"When at the last extremity and death seems inevitable, the principal men assemble with their medicine bags, drums and rattles, which they accompany with the death song, to encourage the departing soul on his journey to the next world.

"When life is gone, the body is addressed by some friend of the deceased in a long speech in which he begs of him to take courage and boldly pursue his journey to the great meadow, observing that all his departed friends and relations are anxiously waiting to receive him, and that his surviving friends will soon follow.

"The body is then decently dressed and wrapped in a new blanket, with new shoes garnished, and painted with vermilion on the feet. It is kept for one night in the lodge, and is next day buried in the earth. The nearest relations bear it to the grave, in which it is wrapped up in birch bark instead of a coffin, carefully laying his medicine bag under the head. Some bury kettles, guns, axes and various other articles with the body, but this custom is not general. Before the grave is shut, the nearest relation takes a lock of the deceased's hair and carefully wraps it up in a piece of cloth or blanket; this they continually carry with them from place to place and keep many years as a remembrance. This pledge of their affection is particularly honored at their feasts and drinking matches by having the first offerings of their meat and drink." (Grant, p. 364.)

After being filled with earth the graves were carefully covered, and then, so the account continues, "They either raise a pile of wood over the grave, or inclose it with a fence; at the head of the grave a small post is erected on which they carve the particular mark of the tribe to whom the deceased belonged." And it is of very great interest to find here a brief reference to scaffold burials, and the reason they were erected by the Sauteux: "The bodies of some of their most celebrated chiefs are raised upon high scaffolds, with flags flying and the scalps of their enemies, with other trophies of their prowess, suspended from a high pole, but all those monuments are not intended so much to distinguish their great men from the vulgar as

to ensure to their departed souls the same respectability in the next world which they enjoyed in this.

"It is customary with their warriors at the funeral of their great men to strike the post and relate all their martial achievements as they do in the war dance, and their funeral ceremonies generally conclude by a feast around the grave." (Op. cit., p. 365.)

They cherished the memory of the dead and would often visit the graves of persons who had died 30 or 40 years before and honor them in various ways. During the period of mourning they would blacken their faces, abandon all ornaments, and allow their hair to fall unkempt over their faces. "They, likewise, stab their thighs, legs, and arms in a cruel manner; the women, for the loss of a husband or a favorite child, will cut all their hair, and both sexes wear a black string around their wrists and ankles. All their effects, except those which are absolutely necessary, are voluntarily thrown away, and may be taken by whoever chooses."

The Sauteux believed in the existence of a future state, in the immortality of the soul, and held that death was not to be dreaded as it was but the means of reaching a better world, where the good would ever enjoy themselves. It was their belief that "When life leaves the body the soul immediately goes to the southward, to a delightful country stocked with the choicest game and all things necessary for the happiness of man, and where *Kijai Manitou* receives them on the banks of a beautiful river. Here he keeps his court and judges mankind according to its deserts; the wicked Indians he delivers over to *Machi Manitou*, who receives them under the earth in a wretched dungeon swarming with serpents, and where the poor souls endure every degree of misery, while the good are immediately released from any future dread of pain, and enjoy every pleasure which the heart of man can desire." But before arriving at this haven of rest they reach a river, and according to their belief, "They must cross the river on a single pole, laid across as a bridge, and carry all their wicked deeds in a bundle on their back; if the bundle is too heavy, the unfortunate bearer is apt to stumble and fall in the river, whose rapid stream sweeps him along into the dreary regions, where he must forever remain under dominion of the 'Bad Spirit.' Infants or persons very old and infirm are naturally supposed unable to pass the bridge, but if they were persons of good behaviour before their death, the Master of Life takes pity on them and kindly helps them over." It was supposed to require several days for the souls to reach the pole bridge across the river, during which time they must carry all provisions necessary for the journey. Arriving at the bridge they were offered choice food but if accepted the souls were sent to the Bad Spirit. "All the Sciews

they killed in war are supposed to attend them as slaves to the other world, where husbands live with their wives and children, where society exists as it did before death," never to change. (Op. cit., pp. 354–355.)

The preceding is one of the most interesting records of the burial customs of a northern tribe extant and for that reason has been quoted at length. It was prepared by one who knew the Indian in his primitive state. The burials as they appeared at that time undoubtedly resembled others which stood in the same region a little more than half a century later, "the secluded Ojibway graves, on the banks of Red River," where were to be seen "Sioux scalps decorated with beads, bits of cloth, coloured ribbons, and strips of leather suspended at the extremity of a long slender stick, near the head of the grave." (Hind, p. 120.) Two photographs, probably the first ever made in the Red River Valley, taken in the year 1858 by a member of the Hind expedition, are now reproduced in Plates 2 and 3. These show the covered graves surrounded by fences to serve as additional protection, and probably did not differ in appearance from the graves of the ancestors of the same people through many generations.

On the shores of Mille Lac and in the surrounding region, near the center of the present State of Minnesota, stood the numerous villages of the Dakota two centuries and more ago. It is quite evident, as will be shown in the following pages, that the Dakota were the builders of the many small burial mounds now discovered in the region, and it is of the greatest interest to know that the Ojibway, the later comers, acknowledge the mounds to have been erected by the earlier occupants of the land whom they, by force of arms, pushed southward and westward to and beyond the Mississippi. These mounds, the known burial places of the Siouan tribes, served the invaders as elevated sites for graves of their own dead. Thus we have the explanation of the origin of the so-called "intrusive burials," such as may be encountered in the majority of ancient mounds throughout the length and breadth of the Mississippi Valley.

During the spring of 1900 several of the larger ancient mounds at the Ojibway village of Sagawamick, on the south shore of Mille Lac, were covered with recent Ojibway graves. A typical example is shown in Plate 1, from a photograph made during the month of May of that year. The graves, as will be noticed, were surrounded by pickets to protect them from the innumerable dogs belonging to the village, and from wild animals as well. Great changes have taken place in the appearance of the country during the quarter of a century since the picture was made.

One of the most ancient Ojibway settlements stands on the bank of Red Lake, in the northwestern part of Minnesota. A generation

ago it existed as it had through several centuries, little influenced by contact with the encroaching towns of the whites. A very interesting photograph of a portion of the cemetery near the Ojibway village, made about the year 1895, is shown in Plate 4. This was taken by Rev. J. A. Gilfillan, a great friend of the Ojibway, who labored among the scattered people for a quarter of a century.

No reference to any form of scaffold burial at Mille Lac has been discovered, but it is highly probable that such a method of disposing of the dead was sometimes followed. It appears to have been quite usual in the vicinity of Sandy Lake, a short distance northward. In a diary kept by Martin McLeod during his travels through the present State of Minnesota nearly a century ago is an entry made while at Sandy Lake, November 10, 1836. It reads: "Making preparations for an immediate start up the Mississippi 300 miles to Lake Winnipeg. Weather still mild hope to succeed in getting there with Canoes. Observed a number of coffins containing bodies placed on poles about 12 feet high. Learned that that is frequently the Indian mode of depositing their bodies in this part of the Indian Country." (McLeod, p. 384.)

Cree

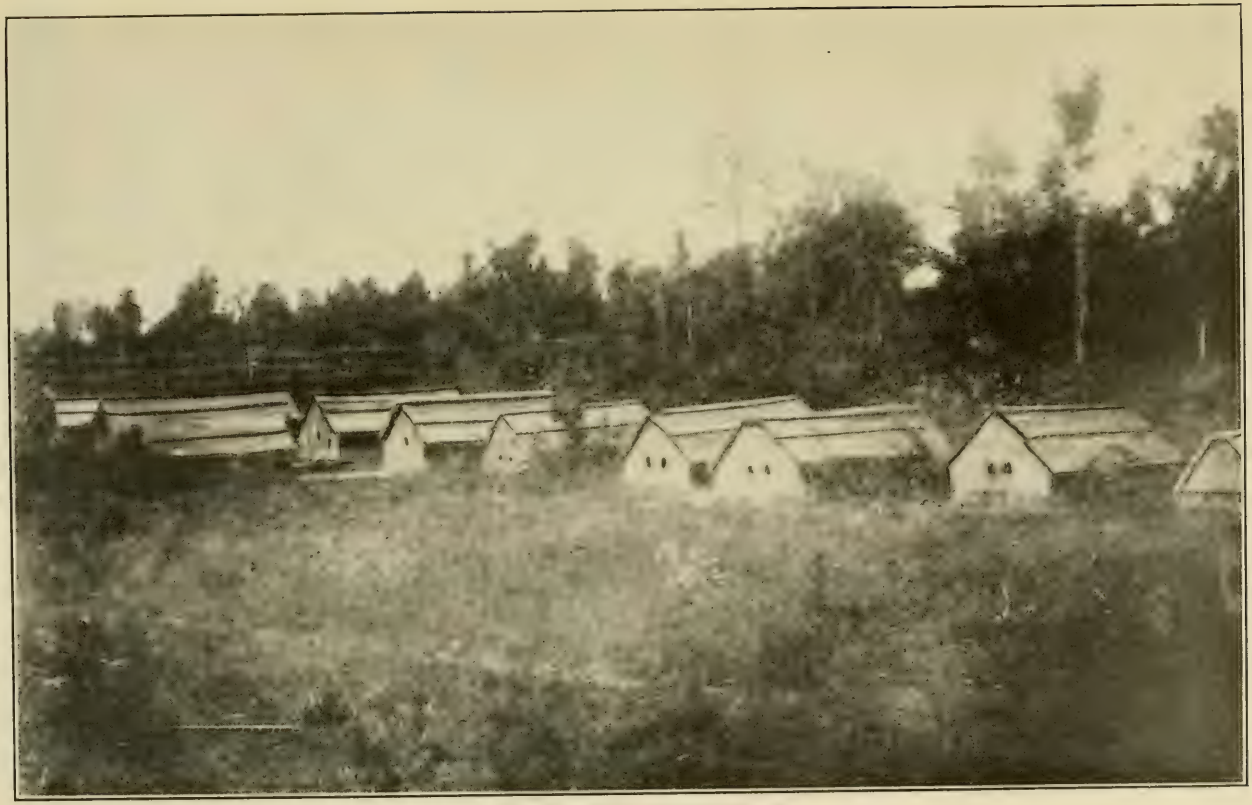
The Cree and Ojibway were closely related; they spoke the same language, followed similar customs, and possessed equally strange beliefs. The Ojibway continued to live in the seclusion of the forest-covered region, but the Cree were attracted to the prairie country, where the buffalo then roamed in vast herds, and although this resulted in some changes in the ways of life of the people, it is evident they adhered to their old burial customs and beliefs. This is clearly indicated by comparing the following brief account of the habits of the Cree with Grant's description of the customs of the Sauteux, and probably not more than five years intervened between the preparation of the two accounts. Mackenzie wrote regarding the Cree, or Knisteneaux: "The funeral rites begin, like all other solemn ceremonials, with smoking, and are concluded by a feast. The body is dressed in the best habiliments possessed by the deceased, or his relations, and is then deposited in a grave, lined with branches; some domestic utensils are placed on it, and a kind of canopy erected over it. During this ceremony, great lamentations are made, and if the departed person is very much regretted the near relations cut off their hair, pierce the fleshy part of their thighs and arms with arrows, knives, &c. and blacken their faces with charcoal. If they have distinguished themselves in war, they are sometimes laid on a kind of scaffolding; and I have been informed that women, as in the East, have been known to sacrifice themselves to the manes of their

INDIAN GRAVES, COVERED WITH SPLIT STICKS

Photograph by Humphrey L. Hime, on the banks of Red River, 1858

INDIAN GRAVES, COVERED WITH BIRCH BARK

Photograph by Humphrey L. Hime, on the banks of Red River, 1858



OJIBWAY GRAVES AT RED LAKE, MINN. ABOUT 1895

SOUTHERN CHEYENNE TREE BURIAL. SOUTH CANADIAN RIVER, OKLA., 1891

Photograph by James Mooney

husbands. The whole of the property belonging to the departed person is destroyed, and the relations take in exchange for the wearing apparel, any rags that will cover their nakedness. The feast bestowed on the occasion, which is, or at least used to be, repeated annually, is accompanied with eulogiums on the deceased, and without any acts of ferocity. On the tomb are carved or painted the symbols of his tribe, which are taken from the different animals of the country." (Mackenzie, pp. xcviii–xcix.) And the same writer when describing the many strange beliefs of the Cree wrote: "Among their various superstitions, they believe that the vapour which is seen to hover over moist and swampy places, is the spirit of some person lately dead. They also fancy another spirit which appears, in the shape of a man, upon the trees near the lodge of a person deceased, whose property has not been interred with them. He is represented as bearing a gun in his hand, and it is believed that he does not return to his rest, till the property that has been withheld from the grave has been sacrificed to it." (Op. cit., p. cvi.)

While at Fort Union, September 28, 1851, Friedrich Kurz witnessed another form of Cree mourning. He wrote in his journal at that time: "Today I saw a Cree squaw with the upper part of her body entirely uncovered; a sign, they say, of mourning for the loss of a child. She was walking and wore a buffalo robe. The Cree squaw's garb is like that of the Sauteuse woman, i. e. shoulders and arms bare, skirt held up by means of bands or straps."

Cheyenne

Generations ago the Cheyenne lived far eastward from the Missouri, and possibly at one time their villages were in the midst of the densely timbered area of Minnesota between the shore of Mille Lac and the extremity of Lake Superior. Thence they moved to the valley of the Minnesota and by successive moves up that stream arrived in a region then teeming with countless herds of buffalo. They pushed across the Great Plains and soon became a veritable plains tribe, following and hunting the buffalo, which became so necessary to them in their changed ways of life.

A century ago all were living in one community, or rather region, but about the year 1830 some moved southward, later on to be joined by others. These have been designated the Southern Cheyenne, and their home at the present time is in Oklahoma. Those who remained in the north and who are known as the Northern Cheyenne have lands in Montana.

It is quite natural to suppose that with a decided change in the nature of their surroundings, from a heavily forested country to a

vast open prairie, many of their tribal customs would show a corresponding change. This was undoubtedly true in respect to the burial customs of the tribe, and it is highly probable that while living in the region of lakes, surrounded by forests of pine, they deposited their dead in excavated graves after the fashion of the kindred Ojibway, who occupied the same territory until recent years.

The customs of the Cheyenne of the present day and of those of recent times have been recorded by Grinnell, and no work on the American Indians previously printed contains such a vast amount of valuable information regarding the manners and ways of life of a native tribe as does the contribution from which the following quotations are made. Referring to the Cheyenne: "The bodies of men, women, and children were placed on scaffolds in trees, on scaffolds on poles on the prairie, on scaffolds or on beds in a lodge, and in caves or crevices in the rocks, or were placed on the ground and stones piled over them.

"Sometimes, if several people died at the same time, as often happened in epidemics, or after a battle, two or three might be placed on the same scaffold in a tree.

"The body of a man who died in battle, however, was left lying on the prairie, sometimes covered with a blanket, oftener not covered. Men thought it well that wolves, coyotes, eagles, buzzards, and other animals should eat their flesh, and scatter their bodies far and wide over the prairie. . . When a man wounded in battle was being transported to camp, and died on the way, they made a little house, somewhat like a sweat-lodge, and placed him in it, wrapped in blankets on a bed of white sage. The shelter was covered with grass, over which the bark of trees was laid, and over all a sheet was spread and pinned down all around." (Grinnell, II, pp. 163–164.) During the early summer of 1857, after defeating the Cheyenne, the troops under command of Colonel Sumner followed the fleeing Indians. They frequently encountered "along the trail freshly made graves, showing that a number of the Cheyennes had succumbed from their wounds after the fight." (Peck, p. 501.) Could these graves, made by the survivors of a village then endeavoring to escape destruction, have been as elaborately constructed as those mentioned in the preceding note? It is hardly probable.

Doctor Grinnell has given a very complete account of the customs and beliefs attending death and burial among the tribe, and to again quote: "When a man died, anyone who would undertake it, usually his close relations, men and women, sometimes assisted by a comrade or a close friend, if the man had one, prepared the body for burial. It was dressed in its finest clothing, and sometimes friends and relatives brought their own best clothing for him to

be buried in. The body, extended at full length, hands at sides, was placed on robes or blankets, which were then folded closely over it, and the bundle was lashed with ropes passed many times about it. The bundle was then taken out of the lodge, lashed on a travois, and carried to the place of deposit, the immediate family following. With the man they placed his war implements—his gun, bow and arrows, and axe and knives—and also his pipe and tobacco, and anything he especially valued. . . If the dead man owned horses, his best horse was saddled and bridled, and shot near the grave. Sometimes several horses were so killed. If the body was put in a tree or on a scaffold, the horses were shot under it. . . The burial took place soon after death. Because of the fear of ghosts, dead bodies were not kept about. The dead person having become a ghost, his spirit was likely to linger near the body, and might take away with it the spirit of some person still living. . . Relations testified to their grief by cutting off the hair. The wife, the mother, and often the sisters, cut their hair short, gashed their heads, and sometimes the calves of their legs, with knives. Sometimes they cut off a finger. Male relations did not cut their legs, but they unbraided their hair and let it hang loose." (Grinnell, pp. 160–161.)

Two very interesting photographs of tree burials of the Southern Cheyenne are reproduced as Plates 5 and 6. Both pictures were made by the late James Mooney on the banks of South Canadian River, Okla., in 1891. The burial shown in Plate 5 was evidently quite carefully prepared, with skins and pieces of heavy matting covering a rough frame in which the body had been placed. But the burial had probably been exposed to the elements for some months and the covering was in a torn, dilapidated condition when the photograph was made. The second picture, that reproduced in Plate 6, was made by Mooney at the same time and place. However, the platform does not appear to have been constructed with such care, and its size would indicate it had been intended to hold more than one body. It may have held two or three. This, as mentioned by Grinnell, was the custom of the people under certain conditions.

The United States National Museum has a most remarkable example of a Cheyenne burial. It is a travois basket in which had been placed the remains of a small child, wrapped in many blankets, some beautifully decorated, and accompanied by various beads and other ornaments. This rested upon a scaffold and was collected by Dr. G. M. Sternberg on Walnut Creek, Kans., July 26, 1869. A photograph of the travois basket, with the various blankets, etc., folded and placed within it, but not in the manner in which they

were discovered more than half a century ago, is reproduced in Plate 7.

Unfortunately, the photograph which is shown in Plate 8 has not been identified. It belongs to the collection in the National Museum, but when and where made is not known. As it reveals the custom of the Northern Cheyenne, the burial scaffold may be regarded as having been erected by some members of that tribe. The supports of the scaffold at the corner nearest the position of the camera had fallen, thus allowing the scaffold with its burden to sag and to reveal more clearly the mass which rested upon the platform. One body had evidently been wrapped and placed within a travois basket, closely resembling and suggesting the example in the collection of the National Museum. One or more bodies, in addition to that in the travois basket, may have been on the platform. The six buffalo skulls had undoubtedly been placed upon the ground, near the scaffold, for some well-defined purpose or reason.

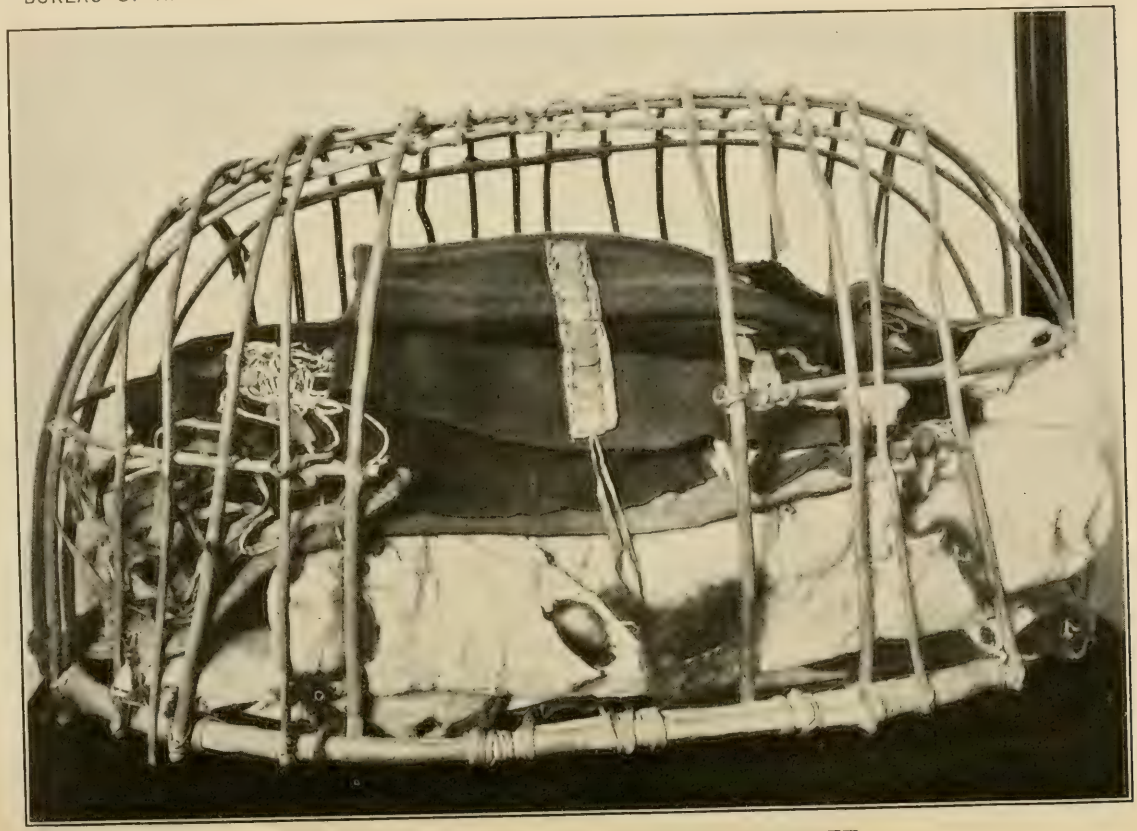
Blackfoot Confederacy

The allied tribes who formed this confederacy were the Siksika, or Blackfeet proper; the Kainah, or Bloods; and the Piegan. Associated with these were the Atsina, one of the divisions of the Arapaho. The habitat of these comparatively numerous tribes was the rugged, mountainous region about the headwaters of the Missouri, with the adjacent plains—a region where game was plentiful, where the deep valleys offered protection against the rigors of the long winters, and where their enemies would seldom penetrate. During the earlier days of their contact with Europeans some bands of the confederated tribes dominated the region as far north as the Saskatchewan.

Maximilian, who came in contact with these tribes during the summer of 1833, wrote regarding the customs of the people at the time of the death of one of their number: "When a Blackfoot dies, they do not bury him in the ground if they can avoid it, but sew him up in a buffalo robe, dressed in his best clothes, his face painted red, but without his weapons, and lay him in some retired place, in ravines, rocks, forests, or on a high, steep bank, and often cover the body with wood or stones, that the wolves may not get at it. Frequently, when they cannot find a solitary spot, the corpse remains above ground in a kind of wooden shed, and they were often obliged to bury it, or to give it to the Whites as a desirable present, which cannot be refused. The relations cut off their long hair, smear it, as well as their faces and clothes, with whitish-grey clay, and, during the time of mourning, wear their worst clothing. Often, too, they cut off a joint of a finger. They believe the dead go into

SOUTHERN CHEYENNE TREE BURIAL, ON SOUTH CANADIAN RIVER, OKLA., 1891

Photograph by James Mooney



CHEYENNE BURIAL IN A TRAVOIS BASKET

Dr. G. M. Sternberg. (U.S.N.M. 8847–8879)

SCAFFOLD BURIAL. REMAINS HAVE BEEN WRAPPED AND PLACED WITHIN A TRAVOIS BASKET. PROBABLY NORTHERN CHEYENNE

INDIAN BURIAL GROUND

After painting by Capt. S. Eastman

another country, where they will have lack of nothing; and that they have often been heard when they were summoned to smoke a pipe together. At the funeral of rich Indians, several horses are often killed upon the spot; and we were told of instances when twelve or fifteen horses were killed in this manner at the funeral of a celebrated chief . . . The relations assemble at the residence of the deceased, and even the men lament and wail. The corpse is generally buried on the first day, and in case of death during the night, it is removed on the following morning." (Maximilian, pp. 258–259.) He likewise referred briefly to the treatment of the sick: "The medicine men or physicians of the Blackfeet are very unskilful. We always saw them take water in their mouths, which they spit out over the wounded . . . Drums and rattles (schischikue) were daily used in their attendance on the sick, in the closed tent . . . These Indians have some efficacious remedies derived from the vegetable kingdom, one of which is a whitish root from the Rocky Mountains, which is called, by the Canadians, rhubarb, which is said to resemble our rhubarb in its effect and taste, and likewise to act as an emetic. Another root is esteemed to be a powerful remedy against the bite of serpents. In all cases they have recourse to the drum and the rattle, and have great confidence in the intolerable noise caused by those instruments. The Blackfeet make their rattles of leather, wood, or bladder." (Op. cit., p. 258.)

The burial and mourning customs of the Blackfeet were interestingly described by another observer a few years later: "The Blackfeet do not place their dead on scaffolds but either in a hole well covered to keep off the wolves, or they leave them in the lodge with everything just as it is when they die. In that case the wolves of course eat their bodies very soon; and I am told that in this way the body of nearly every Blackfoot is disposed of. When one of them is in mourning he puts white earth on his head and goes out before his lodge wailing most piteously; as soon as the neighbors see that they all rush to his lodge and take it and everything it contains, leaving him nothing but his horse. The death of a relation is therefore a very serious affair, since a man loses all his property as well as his friend." (Culbertson, p. 126.)

The two preceding accounts contain rather conflicting statements, but they may refer to different groups of the Blackfoot confederacy. Possibly the tribal customs have undergone a change within a comparatively short time. This would be suggested by the following quotation: "Their manner of burial has always been (until recently) to inclose the dead body in robes or blankets, the best owned by the departed, closely sewed up, and then, if a male or chief, fasten in the branches of a tree so high as to be beyond the reach of wolves, and then left to slowly waste in the dry winds. If the body was

that of a squaw or child, it was thrown into the underbrush or jungle, where it soon became the prey of the wild animals. The weapons, pipes, &c., of men were inclosed, and the small toys of children with them. The ceremonies were equally barbarous, the relatives cutting off, according to the depth of their grief, one or more joints of the fingers, divesting themselves of clothing even in the coldest weather, and filling the air with their lamentations. All the sewing up and burial process was conducted by the squaws, as the men would not touch nor remain in proximity to a dead body." (Yarrow, p. 161.) The preceding notes were prepared by John Young at the Blackfoot Agency, and tell of conditions as they existed some 50 years ago, but it is doubtful if he was acquainted with local customs of the more distant villages, where the older methods of disposing of the dead may still have been practiced.

Another and what is intended to be a general account of the burial customs of these tribes written only a few years later is very interesting as it contains references to certain customs not mentioned by other writers. It begins: "Their funeral and burial ceremonies indicate their belief in the immortality of the soul. These forms are of a similar type among all the tribes composing the nation. They place their dead, dressed in gaudiest apparel, within a tent, in a sitting posture, or occasionally fold them in skins and lay them on high scaffolds out of the reach of wild beasts, under which the relatives weep and wail. The arms and horses are buried with them, to be used in the long journey to the spirit land, showing the possession of the idea of the dual nature of matter and spirit." (Robinson, pp. 193–194.) And the same writer continues and relates a curious custom following the death of a child: "Immediately upon its decease, the whole village rush into the lodge and take possession of whatever portable property they can seize upon, until the grief-stricken parents are stripped of all their worldly possessions, not even excepting their clothing. The only method of evading the custom is to secrete the most valuable property beforehand, generally a matter difficult of accomplishment." (Op. cit., p. 194.) Evidently the death of a child caused much sorrow among the people, and as told by one who was well acquainted with the ways of life of Blackfeet: "Late one afternoon as I was pursuing my way through the outskirts of the camp, I heard a low sad wail, and on looking up, saw a poor woman meanly clad, the beautiful garments of yesterday having been taken from her. Her legs from the knees to the feet had been gashed with a knife and the blood was clotted upon them. Her hair had been cut off, and one of the fingers on the left hand had been severed at the first joint. A piece of wood lay in the palm of the injured hand, the clotted blood was mingled with ashes, which had been sprinkled over

it. I spoke to her and she pointed to a tree, where hidden within the branches lay a little bundle, the darling of her bosom, recently dead. She turned from me and sang her coronach, mentioning the name of her babe and calling upon it to come back to her. Deeply and tender these Indian mothers love their children, and no suffering is too great for them to bear on their behalf." (Maclean, p. 66.)

In the same account is a reference to the placing of the dead "in the crotches of trees, or raised platforms, and in lodges," the latter probably resembling the similar form of burial as mentioned among the Crow and Oglala. The writer whose work has just been quoted continues and gives a brief description of the treatment of the sick, and likewise of conditions that exist after death. He says: "When anyone is sick a part of the garments of the sick person is placed upon the top of the lodge, that being shaken by the wind the prairie spirits may be induced to stop upon their journey, and the medicine man earnestly performs his incantations and giving of medicines, assisted by the friends of the sick person, and the gods, listening to the prayers, will aid in the overthrow of the evil genius which dwells in the body. During a severe time of sickness in one of the camps, as I sat beside the medicine man in one of the lodges, a large number of children were brought in, and the medicine man, taking the dress from the top of the lodge, rubbed the children's persons with it, as a protection against the attack of the disease. When anyone dies, he is said to have gone to the Sand Hills.

"The people are afraid of the spirits of the dead, and at once they remove the lodge, and sometimes even tear down the house, lest the spirit of the deceased return and inflict injury upon the living. They believe that the spirits of the dead hold communion with each other, and require food and clothing like the living, only as they are spiritual, they need the spiritual part, and not the material, for their sustenance. (Op. cit., p. 67.)

Arapaho

The ancient habitat of the Arapaho, before they reached the open prairie lands to follow the buffalo, was probably in the timbered regions northeast of the Minnesota River.

The Atsina, a division of the Arapaho more closely connected with the Blackfeet, were usually mentioned by the early narrators as the Gros Ventres of the Prairies, and as such they were alluded to by Maximilian. The latter wrote during August, 1833: "The Gros Ventres des Prairies . . . In the main, their customs agree with those of the Blackfeet, and they dispose of their dead in the same manner." (Maximilian, p. 234.)

Sauk and Foxes

Although the earlier habitat of these closely related tribes was east of the Mississippi, they had, before the close of the first half of the last century, removed to the westward. A century ago the people of the tribes evidently maintained their primitive manners and ways of life, little changed through contact with the European settlers. An interesting account of their ceremonies attending death and burial was recorded by an agent to the tribes, Thomas Forsyth, dated St. Louis, January 15, 1827. He wrote in part: "When an Indian is sick and finds he is going to die, he may direct the place and manner of his interment, his request is religeously performed. The Sauk and Fox Indians bury their dead in the ground and sometimes have them transported many miles to a particular place of interment. The grave is dug similar to that of white people, but not so deep, and a little bark answers for a coffin, the body, is generally carried to the grave by old women, howling at intervals most piteously. Previous to closing the grave one or more Indians who attend the funeral will make a motion with a stick or war-club called by the Indians Puc-ca-maw-gun speaking in an audible voice, 'I have killed so many men in war, I give their spirits to my deceased friend who lies there (pointing to the body) to serve him as slaves in the other world.' After which the grave is filled up with earth, and in a day or two afterwards a kind of cabin is made over the grave with split boards something like the roof of a house, if the deceased was a brave a post is planted at the head of the grave, on which is painted with vermillion the number of scalps and prisoners he had taken in war, distinguishing the sexes in a rude manner of painting peculiar to themselves. The Indians bury their dead as soon as the body becomes cold, after the death of an adult all the property of the deceased is given away to the relations of the deceased and the widow or widower returns to his or her nearest relations . . . Many may mourn for the loss of a relation but the widows are always the principal mourners, they are really sincere, they are to be seen all in rags, their hair disheveled, and a spot of black made with charcoal on the cheeks, their countenance dejected, never seen to smile but appears always pensive, seldom give loose to their tears unless it is alone in the woods, where they are out of the hearing of any person, there they retire at intervals and cry very loud for about fifteen minutes, they return to their lodges quite composed." Evidently the above statement regarding the disposal of the property of the deceased does not refer to, or rather does not include, certain ornaments and arms, and later the narrative contains this brief statement: "In burying Indians they place all their ornaments of the deceased, sometimes his gun and

other implements for hunting, also some tobacco in his grave, paint and dress the dead body as well as possible previous to interment." (Blair, II, pp. 206–209.)

It was the belief of the people, so the account continues, "that the spirit of a deceased person hovers about the village or lodge for a few days, then takes its flight to the land of repose." Leaving the abodes of the living, the spirit "arrives at a very extensive Pirarie, over which they see the woods at a great distance appearing like a blue cloud." Beyond the prairie is a rapid stream which flows between it and the distant woods, "across this stream is a pole which is continually in motion by the rapidity of the water, the spirit must attempt to cross on the pole, if he or she has been a good person in this world, the spirit will get safe over and will find all of his or her good relations who died formerly." The woods are filled with game, and to arrive there is to experience everlasting joy and happiness, but if "the person has done bad in this life, his or her spirit will fall off the pole into the water, the current of which will carry the spirit to the residence of the evil spirit," and there it will ever remain in misery.

An interesting burial of a member of one of these tribes was encountered by a missionary late in April, 1856, near Ottumwa, Coffey County, Kans. It stood in the timber, probably not far from the left or north bank of the Neosho River. He wrote: "A flock of carrion crows and buzzards attracted my attention. I rode out into the timber to see what they were after, and soon found what the gathering of the crows and buzzards meant. I saw a small pen built of poles and small logs, notched down cabin fashion . . . I found the body of a large Indian man sitting upright in the pen with a blanket thrown around him. He was kept in an upright position by two posts driven at his back. A post with the bark peeled off and painted red was driven in the ground outside of the pen. It was adorned with some scalps which had been nailed on the top of it, and some rude pictures of buffalo, elk, men and ponies. Beside him was a bottle filled with some kind of liquid, a bow and arrows, and a vessel that had probably been filled with succotash. The flesh had fallen off his head and face, giving him a very ghastly appearance. The pen was covered with logs to protect the body from the hungry coyotes . . . I stopped at the first cabin I came to and made inquiry about what I had seen, and to my surprise the man did not know there was a dead Indian so near his home. He knew, however, that the Sac and Fox Indians had spent the winter in the river bend below and had fed their ponies on the mulberry brush and wild rye." (Rice, pp. 307–308.) Some months later, while at the agency, Rice was told that during the winter while

members of the tribes were encamped near the Neosho, "one of the big Indians, a Blackhawk, died and they put him away," as described above.

SIOUAN TRIBES

The Siouan tribes form several distinct groups and their combined population caused them to rank second among the linguistic stocks, the Algonquian being the most numerous. It is quite evident that during the past centuries a great movement of the Siouan tribes occurred, forcing them, for some reasons unknown at this time, to abandon their old homes far east of the Mississippi, in the upper and central valley of the Ohio, and to seek new lands in the West.

Dakota-Assiniboin Group

The Dakota will first be considered. This is the largest of the divisions of the Siouan linguistic family, and included seven tribes, the Mdewakanton, Wahpeton, Wahpekute, Sisseton, Yankton, Yanktonai, and Teton—the Seven Council Fires of the Dakota.

During the latter half of the seventeenth century the first four tribes just mentioned were discovered by the French occupying villages in the central part of the present State of Minnesota, on the shores of the great lakes, surrounded by dense pine forests. Soon they were to be driven southward and westward by the Ojibway, whose superiority of strength may be attributed to the possession of firearms which they obtained from the French traders.

MDEWAKANTON

Saturday, May 26, 1900, the writer was in camp on the northeastern shore of Mille Lac, Minn. A short distance down the lake shore was a large group of artificial mounds, 127 in number, some of which were 10 feet in height and 60 feet in diameter, although the great majority were much smaller. This was undoubtedly the site of a Sioux village of two and one-half centuries ago, and the mounds were the burial places of the dead. It was an interesting site, typical of others throughout the region, all of which were worthy of careful examination. Two of the mounds were excavated and in the first a single stone implement was discovered, but no trace of bones. The second mound was about 3 feet in height and 15 feet in diameter and proved of much interest. Resting upon or near the original surface were parts of four skeletons. In every case the long bones of the arms and legs had been placed together, with a skull resting upon the bundle thus formed. There were four such bundles which were discovered in the relative positions as indicated in the accompanying

sketch. (Fig. 1.) In one instance two small ribs and two vertebrae were found in contact with the long bones, and one flint knife and a single fragment of pottery were discovered in the earth between the human bones, but no other objects were recovered from the mound. All material of a perishable nature had long ago decayed and disappeared, and undoubtedly the bones, when they were placed upon the ground to be covered with earth, were wrapped in skins, bags, or robes, possibly decorated with embroidery of quills. The

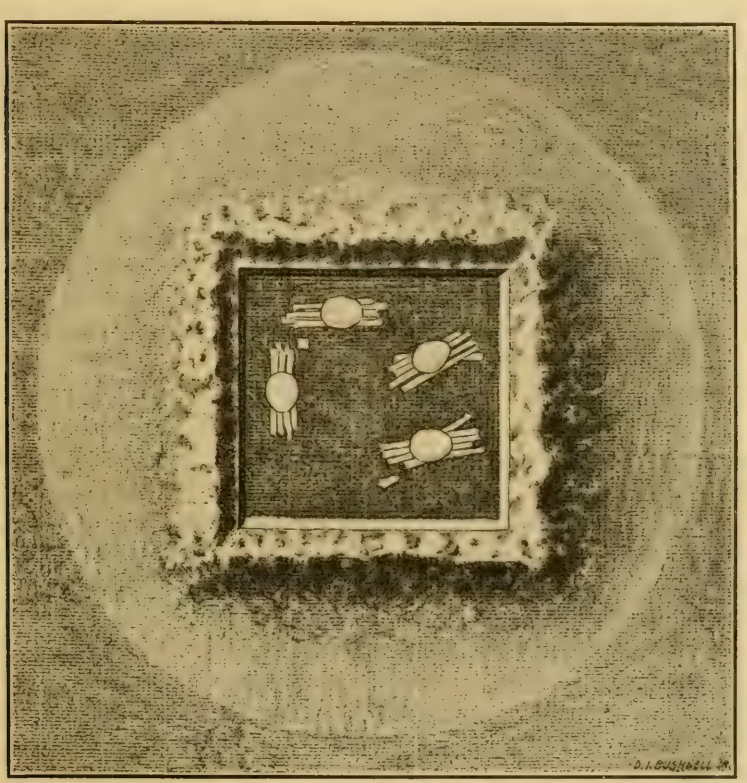


FIG. 1.—Four burials in a mound on the northeast shore of Mille Lac, Minn.

bones remain but they will soon have vanished, leaving no trace of the burials.

Early in the spring of the year 1680 Father Louis Hennepin while ascending the Mississippi was taken captive by a Sioux war party. They continued up the river, thence through the dense forests to their village situated on the shore of a small lake only a short distance south of Mille Lac. (Bushnell, (1), pp. 45–46.) While at the village Father Hennepin saw much to interest him and fortunately his notes were preserved. He referred to the strange custom of the people in caring for and carrying about with them the bones of their relatives. He wrote regarding a certain member of the

tribe: "This wily savage had the bones of some important deceased relative, which he preserved with care in some skins dressed and adorned with several rows of black and red porcupine quills; from time to time he assembled his men to give it a smoke, and he made us come several days in succession to cover the deceased's bones with goods, and by a present wipe away the tears he had shed for him, and for his own son killed by the Miamis. To appease this captious man, we threw on the bones of the deceased several fathoms of French tobacco, axes, knives, beads, and some black wampum bracelets." (Shea, pp. 216–217.) Soon after reaching the village of their captors Hennepin wrote: "Aquipaguetin's son, who called me his brother, paraded about with our brocade chasuble on his bare back, having rolled up in it a dead man's bones, for whom these people had a great veneration." (Op. cit., p. 226.)

It is reasonable to suppose the bones of their relatives, so carefully preserved and cared for, would later be buried. Undoubtedly the four distinct bundles of bones discovered in the mound at Mille Lac had been preserved and carried about, wrapped in decorated skins, before they were placed upon the ground to be covered with a mass of earth.

The Mdewakanton removed from the vicinity of Mille Lac to the banks of the Mississippi, below the Minnesota, where they were living when visited by American explorers during the early part of the nineteenth century.

During the early summer of 1823 Major Long's party started from Fort Crawford to trace the course of the Minnesota River, then known as the St. Peters, in which undertaking they were quite successful. Some members of the party went overland to Fort Snelling, situated at the mouth of the Minnesota, and others accompanied the boat used in conveying supplies to that post. On June 29 the latter party reached "Wapasha's village," and during the afternoon of July 1 were at "the Redwing village." The following day they passed the mouth of the St. Croix and not far away went ashore to examine an Indian cemetery. It stood on the bank of the river, "but elevated above the water's level; it exhibits several scaffolds, supporting coffins of the rudest form; sometimes a trunk, (purchased from a trader,) at other times a blanket, or a roll of bark, conceal the bodies of the deceased. There were, also, several graves, in which are probably deposited the bones, after all the softer parts have been resolved into their elements, by long exposure to the atmosphere." Later in the day they arrived at Fort Snelling. (Keating, I, pp. 288–289.) The cemetery just mentioned belonged to the village of Kaposia, where Little Crow was chief, a village of much importance in its time.

The several villages on the banks of the Mississippi below Fort Snelling always proved places of interest to the traveler, as they did to Latrobe just 90 years ago, when he wrote: "We passed more than one permanent village of the Sioux, now all deserted; the houses were made of rude poles covered with pieces of oak-bark, and swarmed with fleas, numerous as the dust. In their vicinity were seen the dead bodies of their chiefs, wasting in the air, enclosed in rude wooden cases, elevated upon scaffolds raised eight or ten feet above the surface." (Latrobe, II, p. 287.) This was during the autumn, and the Indians were evidently on their fall hunt, seeking buffalo on the prairie lands to the west and south or in the valley of the St. Croix.

A later and more complete account of the cemetery at Kaposia has been preserved. It refers to conditions at that most interesting village during the spring of 1849, at which time it had a population of about 300, and consisted of some 40 lodges, with two frame houses, one occupied by a missionary, the other by a teacher. On May 17 of that year, "On the high bluffs in the rear of their village, several flags, affixed to long poles, were seen floating in the wind. Beneath these flags, erected on scaffolds about ten feet high, were the bodies of deceased Indians in coffins, covered with white or red cloth. This custom of elevating their dead on scaffolds originated, probably, in the difficulty of burying their dead during the winter. The bodies of those who died during that season of the year were preserved until spring for interment, and were erected on scaffolds to preserve them from the reach of wolves. It has grown into a custom, so that now the bodies of those who request it are elevated on scaffolds at other seasons of the year. A half-breed Indian informed me, that Indians dread to have the heavy earth press upon their breasts; they prefer to have their bodies elevated in a conspicuous place, where they can have a view of all that is transpiring around them. In a few months the bodies are, in ordinary cases, taken down and buried. Sometimes, however, they are left on the scaffold several years, especially those of persons of distinction in the tribe." (Seymour, p. 93.) A few days later Seymour again visited the village of Kaposia, and in describing the cemetery wrote: "Ascending the high bluff which overhangs the village, I examined their burial-ground, which occupies the summit. The first object that attracted my attention was a small bowlder, painted red, and encircled by offerings, which the friends of deceased persons had made to this idol; a dead eagle, a dead dog, an arrow, etc., were among the offerings. If any one is in want of articles thus offered to their idols, it is regarded as lawful to take them, provided others, of equal value, are left in their stead." And describing the burials them-

selves: "Attached to the poles, upon which some of the coffins are suspended, are bunches of hair, resembling a scalp. I supposed that these were placed here to commemorate the exploits of the deceased: I was informed, however, that they were torn by mourners from their own heads, in testimony of their grief. The bodies, when buried, are protected by a tight paling closing over them, like a double roof. This is necessary to prevent the shallow graves from being dug up by the wolves.

"Mourners, during occasional paroxysms of grief, resort to the graves of their friends, and vent their sorrow in loud, doleful, and hideous wailings." (Op. cit., pp. 140–141.)

The expedition led by Long arrived at Fort Snelling July 2, 1823, and after a brief rest began to ascend the Minnesota. They soon passed Taoapa, better known as Shakopee's village, and later reached the small Indian settlement called by them Weakaote. Though small and deserted it proved an interesting site. It "consisted of two lodges and the ruins of a third, near which were two scaffolds. On these scaffolds, which are from eight to ten feet high, corpses were deposited in a box made from part of a broken canoe. Some hair was suspended, which we at first mistook for a scalp; but our guide informed us that these were locks of hair torn from the heads by the relations, to testify their grief. In the centre, between the four posts which supported the scaffold, a stake was planted in the ground; it was about six feet high, and bore an imitation of human figures, five of which had a design of a petticoat, indicating them to be females, the rest, amounting to seven, were naked, and were intended for male figures. Of the latter, four were headless, showing that they had been slain; the three other male figures were unmutilated, but held a staff in their hand, which, as our guide informed us, designated that they were slaves. The post, which is an unusual accompaniment to the scaffold that supports a warrior's remains, does not represent the achievements of the deceased, but those of the warriors that assembled near his remains, danced the dance of the post, and related their martial exploits. A number of small bones of animals were observed in the vicinity, which were probably left there after a feast celebrated in honour of the dead. The boxes in which the corpses were placed are so short that a man could not lie in them extended at full length, but in a country where boxes and boards are scarce, this is overlooked. After the corpses have remained a certain time exposed, they are taken down and interred. Our guide, Renville, related to us, that he had been a witness to an interesting, though painful circumstance, that occurred here. An Indian who resided on the Mississippi, hearing that his son had died at this spot, came up in a canoe, to take charge of the remains, and convey

them down the river to his place of abode; but, on his arrival, he found that the corpse had already made such progress towards decomposition, as rendered it impossible for it to be removed. He then undertook, with a few friends, to clean off the bones; all the flesh was scraped off and thrown into the stream; the bones were carefully collected into his canoe, and subsequently carried down to his residence." (Keating, I, pp. 332–333.)

The statement by Renville, as given above, tends to add value to certain passages in Carver's curious work. He claimed to have spent the winter of 1766–67 among the Sioux, then occupying villages on the banks of the Minnesota, and wrote: "I left the habitations of these hospitable Indians the latter end of April 1767; but did not part from them for several days, as I was accompanied on my journey by near three hundred of them, among whom were many chiefs, to the mouth of the River St. Pierre. At this season these bands annually go to the Great Cave . . . to hold a grand council with all the other bands; wherein they settle their operations for the ensuing year. At the same time they carry with them their dead for interment bound up in buffaloes skins." (Carver, p. 70.) He had already mentioned the cave, placing it about 30 miles below the Falls of St. Anthony, and wrote: "The Indians term it Wakon-teebe, that is, the Dwelling of the Great Spirit." And, "At a little distance from this dreary cavern is the burying place of the several bands of the Naudowessie Indians: though these people have no fixed residence, living in tents, and abiding but a few months in one spot, yet they always bring the bones of their dead to this place; which they take the opportunity of doing when the chiefs meet to hold their councils." (Op. cit., p. 59.) The remains would first be disposed of and the council would then be held.

The spot thus described so many years ago had probably not changed in appearance when painted by Eastman nearly a century later. Eastman's painting, as engraved by J. Andrews and reproduced by Schoolcraft, is here given as Plate 9. The view from the Mississippi shows the high bluff with its summit plateau covered with burials. This, according to Schoolcraft, was the burial place for the people of the three Mdewakanton villages, all of which were situated a few miles distant. (Schoolcraft, II, p. 97.)

Some 14 years after the Long expedition another explorer, in the same region, recorded a similar experience. On April 14, 1837, McLeod entered in his diary: "Embarked at sun raise in a canoe with Indians and squaws who are going down to where the St. Peters joins the Mississippi at Fort Snelling. Have for company 10 Indians and squaws in three canoes. These people have in one of their Canoes the bodies of two of their deceased relatives which they intend carrying to a lake near the Mississippi more than 100 miles

from this. In many instances these people bring the bodies of their friends much farther when it is the wish of the dying person to be deposited in a particular place." (McLeod, p. 418.) They were probably bound for the burial ground mentioned by Schoolcraft, not to a lake as mentioned.

Twelve years after Major Long's party ascended the Mississippi, and passed the several important native settlements before reaching the mouth of the St. Peters, or Minnesota River, the English geologist, Featherstonhaugh, traversed the same region. On September 7, 1835, he arrived at the village of the great chief Wapasha, on the bank of the Mississippi, in the present Wabasha County, Minn. The village at that time "consisted of twelve large oblong wigwams, or teebees, covered in with bark, and two round lodges, made with poles and covered with skins." He witnessed a peculiar form of mourning practiced by the people of the village and likewise visited their cemetery. His narrative continued: "As we approached the prairie, a great number of men came to the landing-place, painted in the most hideous manner, one-half of their faces being rubbed over with a whiteish clay, and the other side all begrimed with charcoal; not that they were going to war, but because they were in mourning for the wife of a chief of the second class, who had recently died." And "near the village several death-scaffolds were erected, formed of four poles each, about eight feet high, with a floor made by fastening shorter poles to them about seven feet from the ground, and the frail structure shored up by another pole extending to the ground. Upon this floor a rude coffin was placed, containing the body, and from one end of the scaffold a sort of bunting was flying, to denote the rank of the individual . . . An old squaw was standing near the scaffold of the defunct lady, howling in a most extraordinary manner. Around these scaffolds were numerous inferior graves, some of them containing full-length corpses, and others only the bones of the dead after they have remained too long on the scaffolds to hold together." (Featherstonhaugh, I, pp. 237–238.)

Later, before passing the mouth of the St. Croix, he encountered a number of Indians, among whom "There was a frightful-looking old squaw, with a little boy, a youth about twenty, with strings of wampum hanging from his forelocks, and his face all begrimed with charcoal, whilst his sister, a tolerable-looking young squaw, about nineteen, had only a black grimy spot on each cheek. The journey they were upon was connected with the death of a relative, and the party had gone into cheap mourning, which, nevertheless, amongst these simple and rude people, is the symbol of wounded affections." (Op. cit., p. 252.) And quite similar to this was a reference made by the wife of Capt. Seth Eastman to an old Indian whom she

saw at Fort Snelling. He was an old man, so she wrote, "in mourning, and he looked particularly *en dishabille*, his clothing (and there was little of it) was dirty in the extreme. His face he had painted perfectly black; his hair he had purposely disarranged, to the greatest degree. Thus he presented a striking contrast to the elaborately adorned warriors around him." (Eastman, p. 90.)

SISSETON

Continuing up the Minnesota, passing the encampments of the Mdewakanton, the Long expedition soon arrived among the Sisseton, or, rather, within the region which they claimed and occupied. But the burial customs of all the Siouan tribes then encountered in the Valley of the Minnesota were similar, and a description of one would undoubtedly have applied to all. On July 15, 1823, so the narrative of the expedition states: "we saw the remains of Indian habitations; they were deserted. Upon a scaffold, raised eighteen feet above the ground, and situated upon an elevated part of the prairie, the putrefying carcass of an Indian lay exposed to view. It had not been enclosed in a box, but merely shrouded in a blanket, which the wind and atmospheric influences had reduced to tatters. Fifteen horizontal black marks, drawn across one of the posts that supported the scaffold, designated, as we were informed by Renville, that as many scalps had been offered in sacrifice to the deceased, by those who danced at the funeral." (Keating, I, pp. 340–341.) This scaffold appears to have been unusually high, and the body was evidently less carefully prepared and wrapped than was customary. The camp and burial just mentioned stood in either Nicollet or Blue Earth County, the Minnesota River passed between the two, and a short distance below was the mouth of Blue Earth River, the site of the present Mankato. "By the Dacotas it is called Makato Osa Watapa, which signifies 'the river where blue earth is gathered' . . . The mouth of the Blue Earth river is the chief residence of a tribe of the Dacotas, who call themselves the Miakechakesa, and who are generally known by the traders by the name of Sisitons." (Op. cit., pp. 341–342.) About a half century ago Dr. C. E. McChesney, acting assistant surgeon, United States Army, prepared a most interesting account of the customs attending death and burial then prevailing among the Sisseton and closely related Wahpeton. The following quotations are made from the extended notes: "Before the year 1860 it was a custom, for as long back as the oldest members of these tribes can remember, and with the usual tribal traditions handed down from generation to generation, in regard to this as well as to other things, for these Indians to bury in a tree

or on a platform, and in those days an Indian was only buried in the ground as a mark of disrespect in consequence of the person having been murdered, in which case the body would be buried in the ground, *face down*, head toward the south and with a piece of fat in the mouth . . . The platform upon which the body was deposited was constructed of four crotched posts firmly set in the ground, and connected near the top by cross-pieces, upon which was placed boards, when obtainable, and small sticks of wood, sometimes hewn so as to give a firm resting-place for the body. The platform had an elevation of from six to eight or more feet, and never contained but one body, although frequently having sufficient surface to accommodate two or three. In burying in the crotch of a tree and on platforms, the head of a dead person was always placed towards the south; the body was wrapped in blankets or pieces of cloth securely tied, and many of the personal effects of the deceased were buried with it; as in the case of a warrior, his bows and arrows, war-clubs, &c., would be placed alongside of the body, the Indians saying he would need such things in the next world.

"I am informed by many of them that it was a habit, before their outbreak, for some to carry the body of a near relative whom they held in great respect with them on their moves, for a greater or lesser time, often as long as two or three years before burial. This, however, never obtained generally among them, and some of them seem to know nothing about it. It has of late years been entirely dropped, except when a person dies away from home, it being then customary for the friends to bring the body home for burial." (Yarrow, pp. 108–109.)

This was the older method of disposing of the dead, a method which had probably prevailed ever since the tribes had occupied the forest-covered region far eastward of the Valley of the Minnesota. But at the time the account was prepared, so we are told, a large proportion of the people of the two tribes had been under the direct influence of Presbyterian missionaries for a generation or longer, and as a consequence their burial customs had become somewhat changed. Few examples of the old scaffold burial were to be seen, but evidently they persisted in decorating and painting the remains as they had done through many generations. According to Doctor McChesney, the Indians with whom he came in contact disposed of their dead in the following way:

"*Warrior.*—After death they paint a warrior red across the mouth, or they paint a hand in black color, with the thumb on one side of the mouth and the fingers separated on the other cheek, the rest of the face being painted red. (This latter is only done as a mark of respect to a specially brave man.) Spears, clubs, and the

medicine-bag of the deceased when alive are buried with the body, the medicine-bag being placed on the bare skin over the region of the heart. There is not now, nor has there been, among these Indians any special preparation of the grave. The body of a warrior is generally wrapped in a blanket or piece of cloth (and frequently in addition is placed in a box) and buried in a grave prepared for the purpose, always, as the majority of these Indians inform me, with the head towards the *south*. (I have, however, seen many graves in which the head of the occupant had been placed to the *east*. It may be that these graves were those of Indians who belonged to the church; and a few Indians inform me that the head is sometimes placed towards the *west*, according to the occupant's belief when alive as to the direction from which his guiding medicine came, and I am personally inclined to give credence to this latter as sometimes occurring.) In all burials, when the person has died a natural death, or had not been murdered, and whether man, woman, or child, the body is placed in the grave with the face *up*. In cases, however, when a man or woman has been murdered by one of their own tribe, the body was, and is always, placed in the grave with the face *down*, head to the *south*, and a piece of fat (bacon or pork) placed in the mouth. This piece of fat is placed in the mouth, as these Indians say, to prevent the spirit of the murdered person driving or scaring the game from that section of country. Those Indians who state that their dead are always buried with the head towards the south say they do so in order that the spirit of the deceased may go south, the land from which these Indians believe they originally came.

"*Women and children.*—Before death the face of the person expected to die is often painted in a red color. When this is not done before death it is done afterwards; the body being then buried in a grave prepared for its reception, and in the manner described for a warrior, cooking-utensils taking the place of the warrior's weapons. In cases of boys and girls a kettle of cooked food is sometimes placed at the head of the grave after the body is covered. Now, if the dead body be that of a boy, all the boys of about his age go up and eat of the food, and in cases of girls all the girls do likewise. This, however, has never obtained as a custom, but is sometimes done in cases of warriors and women also." (Op. cit., pp. 107–108.)

The article continues and contains many interesting references to the strange and curious beliefs of the people. It tells of a custom of removing "a lock of hair from the top or scalp lock of a warrior, or from the left side of the head of a woman, which is carefully preserved by some near relative of the deceased, wrapped in pieces of calico and muslin, and hung in the lodge of the deceased and is considered the ghost of the dead person." This bundle, "the ghost," re-

ceived certain offerings, was held in great reverence, and a feast would be held for it. A large proportion of the earthly possessions of an individual would be placed in the grave, some beneath and some above the body. Horses were killed on the grave of a warrior. "No food is ever buried in the grave, but some is occasionally placed at the head of it; in which case it is consumed by the friends of the dead person."

The peculiar custom of carrying the bones of the dead from place to place, and often preserving them thus for several years before placing them in the ground, was observed by these people. As was told by Doctor McChesney: "I am informed by many of them that it was a habit, before their outbreak, for some to carry the body of a near relative whom they held in great respect with them on their moves, for a greater or lesser time, often as long as two or three years before burial. This, however, never obtained generally among them, and some of them seem to know nothing about it. It has of late years been entirely dropped, except when a person dies away from home, it being then customary for the friends to bring the body home for burial." (Op. cit., p. 109.) This curious custom has already been mentioned as prevailing among the kindred Mdewakanton. It was witnessed by Father Hennepin early in the year 1680, and the writer, during the month of May, 1900, discovered burials of such a nature as to prove the bones to have been free from flesh when they were deposited.

The mourning ceremonies, or rather customs, were likewise described by Doctor McChesney. Referring to the days before the year 1860, about which time great changes developed in the manners and ways of life of the Sioux: "After the death of a warrior the whole camp or tribe would assemble in a circle, and after the widow had cut herself on the arms, legs, and body with a piece of flint, and removed the hair from her head, she would go around the ring any number of times she chose, but each time was considered as an oath that she would not marry for a year, so that she could not marry for as many years as times she went around the circle. The widow would all this time keep up a crying and wailing. Upon the completion of this the friends of the deceased would take the body to the platform or tree where it was to remain, keeping up all this time their wailing and crying. After depositing the body, they would stand under it and continue exhibiting their grief, the squaws by hacking their arms and legs with flint and cutting off the hair from their head. The men would sharpen sticks and run them through the skin of their arms and legs, both men and women keeping up their crying generally for the remainder of the day, and the near relatives of the deceased for several days thereafter. . . In cases of women and children, the squaws would

cut off their hair, hack their person with flint, and sharpen sticks and run them through the skin of their arms and legs, crying as for a warrior." (Op. cit., p. 109.)

Such were probably the customs of all the related tribes living in the Valley of the Minnesota a century and more ago.

YANKTONAI

A century ago villages of the Yanktonai were situated in the vicinity of Lake Traverse, in the present Traverse County, Minn. Here the members of the Long party rested July 26, 1823. The post of the Columbia Fur Co. stood near the shore of the lake. A drawing was made by Samuel Seymour showing the wide expanse of water, the trading post, and "the Indian lodges near it, and also a scaffold, upon which the remains of a Sioux had been deposited. The horizon is bounded by a distant view of the Coteau des Prairies." (Keating, II, p. 5.) The scaffold, as shown in the drawing, Plate 10, appears to be very high, and was probably similar to the one previously described as having been raised by the Sisseton farther down the river.

The various groups of Sioux encountered by Long a century ago undoubtedly held similar beliefs and followed like customs in disposing of their dead. As told in the narrative of the expedition: "The ideas of the Dacotas, respecting a future state, differ but little from those of other Indians; and we may receive them with less diffidence, as they have had but little intercourse with missionaries, whether Catholic or otherwise; still, in some of their credences, as related to us, it was impossible not to discover a few of the doctrines of Christianity, which had probably crept in unnoticed by them. The Dacotas admit that there are in man two distinct essences, to which they respectively apply the terms of *Wanare* and *Wahkan*, which our interpreters translate by soul and spirit. They believe that after death the souls go to the Wanare Tebe, or dwelling place of the souls. That in order to reach it, they have to pass over a rock, the edge of which is as sharp as that of a knife; those who fall off go to the region of the evil spirit, where they are kept constantly chopping wood, carrying water, &c. being frequently flogged by their relentless master. Those, on the contrary, that have passed safe over the rock, have a long journey to travel; and as they proceed, they observe the camping places of the souls that have preceded them; at these spots fires are ready made for their accommodation; finally, they reach the habitation of Wahkan Tanka, or Great Spirit. There they find many villages of the dead; they meet with some spirits there, who point out to them the way to the residence of their friends and relations, with whom they are reunited. Their

life is an easy and blissful one, they hunt the buffalo, plant corn, &c. It is believed, that when children are on the point of death, their departed relations return from the land of souls in order to convey them thither. Women are liable to go to either of the places, but all are entitled to a situation in the land of the blessed, except such as have violated their chastity, committed infanticide or suicide. Their system of Ethics is as simple. Men are held to go to the residence of the Great Spirit if they be good and peaceable, or if they die by the hand of their enemies. If they perish in a broil with their own countrymen, their souls are doomed to the residence of the Evil Spirit." (Keating, I, pp. 392–394.)

YANKTON

On May 25, 1833, the steamboat *Yellow Stone*, on which Maximilian and the artist Bodmer were ascending the Missouri, arrived at the Sioux Agency. As they approached the agency they could see, "on the hills, some burying-places of the Sioux Indians; most of them were formed of a high platform, on four stakes, on which the corpse, sewn up in skins, lies at full length; others consisted of stakes and brushwood, like a kind of hedge, in the middle of which the deceased is buried in the ground." And they "were told that the son of a chief was buried in one of the latter, in a standing posture." (Maximilian, pp. 147–148.)

Fortunately Maximilian prepared an interesting description of the native burials then to have been seen in the vicinity of the agency. He wrote at that time: "Among the peculiar customs of the Sioux is their treatment of the dead. Those who die at home are sewed up, as I have before stated, in blankets and skins, in their complete dress, painted, and laid with their arms and other effects on a high stage, supported by four poles, till they are decomposed, when they are sometimes buried. Those who have been killed in battle are immediately interred on the spot. Sometimes, too, in times of peace, they bury their dead in the ground, and protect them against the wolves by a fence of wood and thorns. There were many such graves in the vicinity of the Sioux Agency, among which was that of a celebrated chief, Tschpunka, who was buried with his full dress and arms, and his face painted red. Very often, however, they lay their dead in trees; and we saw, in the neighbourhood of this place, an oak, in which there were three bodies wrapped in skins. At the foot of the tree there was a small arbour, or shed, made of branches of poplar, which the relations had built for the purpose of coming to lament and weep over the dead, which they frequently do for several days successively. As a sign of mourning, they cut off their hair with the first knife that comes to hand, daub themselves with white

clay, and give away all their best clothes and valuable effects, as well as those of the deceased, to the persons who happen to be present. The corpse of a young woman had been enveloped in skins about a week before, and placed between the branches of the oak, with six pieces of wood under it; and a little higher in the tree there was a child." Two days later, the *Yellow Stone* having left the agency, Maximilian wrote: "A well-known Sioux chief, called Tukan Haton, and, by the Americans, the Little Soldier, was on board with his family, intending to accompany us to Fort Pierre, on the Teton

FIG. 2.—Scaffold burials among the Yankton. Drawing by Bodmer

River. These Indians were in mourning for some of their relations lately deceased; their dress was, therefore, as bad as possible, and their faces daubed with white clay." (Maximilian, pp. 152–153.)

A sketch of a group of scaffolds, made at that time by Bodmer, is reproduced in Figure 2.

TETON

On September 26, 1804, Lewis and Clark reached the great village of the Teton, standing at the mouth of the Teton River on the banks of the Missouri. The stream to which the tribal name was applied is now known as Bad River, which flows into the Missouri at Pierre,

Stanley County, S. Dak. However, it is quite evident they had, within a comparatively short time, removed from their earlier home to the eastward, probably from the forest-covered lake region of central Minnesota.

The Teton was the largest of the several divisions of the group, and the great number of skin tipis which formed their village served to attract the attention of all. Thus, Catlin in 1832 referred to "an encampment of Sioux, of six hundred tents of skin lodges, round the Fort," but some of these may have belonged to other divisions of the Sioux who were trading or had come to trade at Fort Pierre.

Fort Pierre and the surrounding encampments of Indians must have presented an animated scene when approached by a river steamboat. The various travelers were equally impressed with the view of the fort standing on the level plain near the bank of the Missouri, with the hills rising in the distance, and the intervening space usually occupied by clusters of skin-covered lodges. As Maximilian wrote when he sighted the fort on May 30, 1833: "Indians, on foot and on horseback, were scattered all over the plain, and their singular stages for the dead were in great numbers near the fort; immediately behind which, the leather tents of the Sioux Indians, of the branches of the Tetons and the Yanktons, stood." (Maximilian, p. 156.) A year later, when returning from the far upper waters of the Missouri, Maximilian, accompanied by the artist Bodmer, again reached Fort Pierre. The former then recorded in his journal: "Mr. Bodmer took several views of the country, and also made a sketch of the stage of a distinguished Sioux warrior, whose remains had been brought from a great distance with much pomp, and were covered with red cloth." (Op. cit., p. 457.) The beautiful drawing made at that time was reproduced by Maximilian as Plate XI, which is here given as Plate 11. This is a picture of unusual interest, as it shows a body placed within a travois frame, resting upon a platform supported by four upright poles. Undoubtedly the travois frame was the one in which it had been secured while being "brought from a great distance with much pomp."

Culbertson visited Fort Pierre during the spring of 1850, and after mentioning the general appearance of the interesting post itself wrote in his journal: "then the Indian lodges are seen around the fort; by their irregularity of position, their conical shape and varied colors, giving life and a picturesque air to the scene; and for a couple of miles below the fort and between it and the bluffs, the whole plain is dotted with horses grazing and moving leisurely about, while the bold bluffs a mile west of the fort affords a fine back-ground for the picture." (Culbertson, p. 101.) Fortunately, a most interesting and valuable account of the burial customs of the

Teton, as observed by Culbertson, is contained in his journal, and is now quoted at length: "The Fort Pierre grave yard lies about a quarter of a mile south of the fort; it is a square piece of ground which has been well fenced in but not ornamented in any way; it contains the bodies of a number of dead, both Indians and Whites: the latter are in the ground and their graves are marked with wooden crosses, or with tombstones recording their names and dates of their death. The Indians however have followed their own customs in disposing of their dead, which is to place them on a scaffold about eight or ten feet from the ground. As you approach the yard coming from the fort, you see elevated on a scaffold supported by rough willow poles and now half broken down, a confused pile of old boxes of various lengths—old trunks and pieces of blankets hanging. These may seem strange things for a grave yard, but these old boxes contain the bodies of dead Indians: they were originally placed on a good scaffold and had piles of blankets wrapped around them, but the scaffold has broken down from exposure to weather and weight of the bodies, which appear to have been heaped on without order of any kind. If you look over the fence to the left of this scaffold, you will see on the ground one of these boxes which has probably fallen down and broken open: and there the bones lay exposed, except the skull which perhaps has been buried by some friend of the deceased; if you look a little more closely you will see lying with the bones, a dark looking object about three inches broad and perhaps fifteen long, tied around with a string: this is some tobacco given to the dead to smoke in the other world; they always place with their dead almost every article of common use, for their benefit in the other world: blankets, sometimes as many as twenty, the best the parties can afford—tobacco, sugar, coffee, molasses, kettles of mush and other things of use. These remain undisturbed until they decay, or are destroyed by the weather or wolves. On the east side is a scaffold put up a few months since; the box is a rough one, daubed with black paint, and is surrounded by several old trunks, that were the property of the old squaw who rests within. On the opposite side is another scaffold, on which is placed the body of a man who died not many months since; you can see the scarlet blanket through the large cracks in this rude coffin. It appears to me, that this method of burial originated in a desire to protect the bodies from the wolves, more than in any of their religious opinions: they frequently bury the bones, after the flesh has decayed entirely. On a large tree, a little above the fort, is a body which must have a great pile of blankets on it, from the size." (Op. cit., p. 102.) A few days later, just before leaving Fort Pierre on the steamboat *El Paso* to ascend the Missouri to and beyond Fort Union, Culbertson entered in his journal: "Before one of the lodges near where

the feast was held, was the body of a little girl who had died yesterday; it was wrapped in a blue blanket, and was to be placed on the scaffold as soon as the coffin should be finished. I did not see the ceremony of conveying it to the tomb, or rather, to its resting place, but it was probably done in a very simple manner, as I was told that the burying of the dead, except braves, is left principally to the squaws. Blankets and food are placed on the scaffold for their use in the other world; the family of the deceased mourn very much, and if others aid them in this sad work, they expect pay and are sure to get it." (Op. cit., p. 108.)

The winter following Culbertson's visit to the upper Missouri Valley was cold and severe. About the middle of January a large party of Indians, with several white men, all from Fort Pierre, were overtaken by the blizzard and 30 of the former are said to have lost their lives. The bodies of the Indians were later carried to the fort where "a few boxes" were provided for them and they were then placed "on scaffolds in their own cemetery." (Marks, p. 224.) The following summer cholera raged in the vicinity of Fort Pierre, and on July 4 of that year, 1851, the Swiss artist Kurz made an interesting sketch of the fort from the river side, probably from the upper deck of the steamboat in which he was ascending the Missouri. The dreaded cholera caused many deaths among the Indians, whose remains were evidently placed upon scaffolds in the cemetery near the fort. In that most interesting autobiography from which the preceding quotation was made, that of the Canadian trader, Louis D. Latellier, is an account of the death and burial of an Indian whose tipi stood near the fort. It reads: "Another death occurred and it was the son of the Iron Horse, a chief of the Sioux nation. In singing he gave up the last breath. In his death there was nothing strange but its funeral interested me the most. After having made the coffin and covered it with scarlet cloth and placed the defunct in it, old Francois L'Alsatien came up to the tepee with his heavy old two-wheeled cart that had never been painted and covered with dry mud. A large bull covered with a rawhide harness was hitched to this cart. We loaded the coffin into the cart and started for the Indian cemetery, Francois standing by the side of his cart driving his old bull, old Henrie Picotte, a partner of the P. Chouteau Fur Company, and myself following behind the cart, two squaws, hired by the relatives of the defunct to do the crying part of the ceremony at the cemetery under the scaffold at the cemetery were following behind us, laughing and chattering while walking up slowly for it was a very hot afternoon. . . . We arrived at the scaffolding cemetery. The scaffold of this dead Indian was already up. It was four posts set in the ground, about five feet high, a fork at each end, in which two cross bars were tied. We put the coffin on top, the

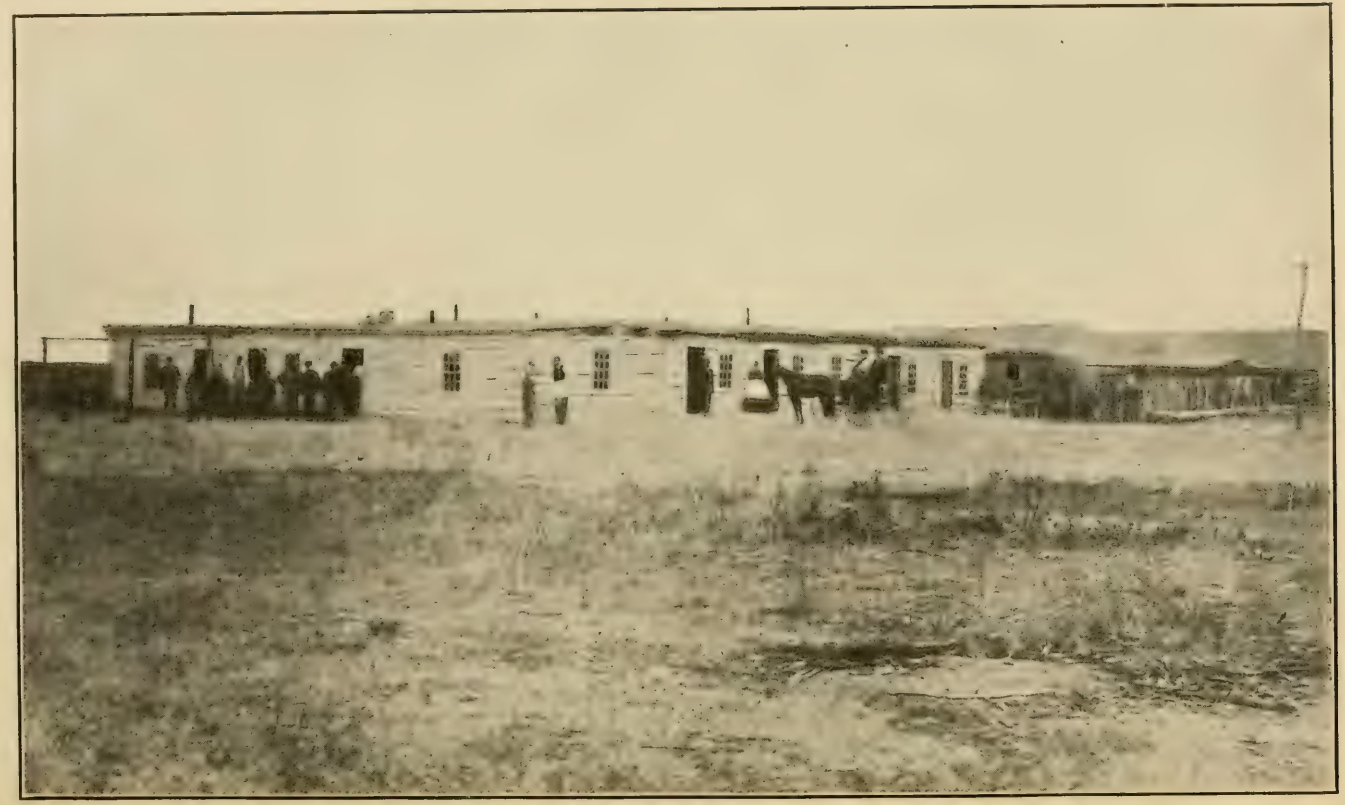
LAKE TRAVERSE, WITH SCAFFOLD BURIAL, JULY 26, 1823

Drawn by Samuel Seymour

FUNERAL SCAFFOLD OF A SIOUX CHIEF NEAR FORT PIERRE

After painting by Karl Bodmer, 1834

FORT LARAMIE, 1868



BROWN'S HOTEL AT FORT LARAMIE, 1868

bow and arrows of the defunct on top of the coffin, and tied the whole to the post, also a long pole with the American flag unfurled. Our ceremony was over. It was already dark with low black clouds hanging over our heads, peals of thunder and lightning was playing in the distance, and we was one mile from the fort. We started in a hurry for home. The two squaws took their positions under the coffin and began their wild crying and loud screams. Before we reached the fort the thunder and lightning with a torrent of rain was rushing all round yet we could hear the crying of the squaws. They were doing it loud and fine, to please their friends, who had hired them for that purpose." (Marks, p. 225.)

Miss Densmore, in her most interesting and valuable work on Teton Sioux music, gave various songs associated with the treatment of the sick. "No one attempted to treat the sick unless he had received a dream telling him to do so, and no one ever disregarded the obligations of such a dream." (Densmore, p. 244.)

Sichangu or Brulés

The Sichangu or Brulés, when mentioned by Lewis and Clark in 1804, occupied both banks of the Missouri, in the vicinity of the White and Teton Rivers, the central portion of the present State of South Dakota. They moved westward, as did the kindred tribes, and by 1860 roamed over the region of the Big Horn, Rosebud, and Tongue Rivers, and often pitched their camps on the banks of Powder River, within the southeastern section of the present State of Montana.

A daughter of Spotted Tail, one of the greatest of the Brulé chiefs, died early in 1866, while the village was encamped on Powder River. It had been her wish to be buried at Fort Laramie, "up on the hill, near the grave of Old Smoke, a distant relative and a great chief among the Sioux in former years." Fort Laramie was 260 miles southward from the camp on Powder River. "When her death took place, after great lamentations among the band, the skin of a deer freshly killed was held over the fire and thoroughly permeated and creosoted with smoke. Ah-ho-appa was wrapped in it, and it was tightly bound around her with thongs, so that she was temporarily embalmed." Runners were sent forward to Fort Laramie to make known the coming of the party. "The landscape was bleak and frozenly arid, the streams were covered with ice, and the hills speckeled with snow. The trail was rough and mountainous. The two white ponies of Ah-ho-appa were tied together, side by side, and the body placed upon them. . . For nearly a week of the trip there was a continual sleet. The journey lasted fifteen days, and was monotonous with lamentations." When the Indians arrived at

the bank of the river, some 2 miles from the post, they were met by troops to serve as escort to the fort. "The next day a scaffold was erected near the grave of Old Smoke. It was made of tent poles twelve feet long, imbedded in the ground and fastened with thongs, over which a buffalo robe was laid, and on which the coffin was to be placed. To the poles of the scaffold were nailed the heads and tails of the two white ponies, so that Ah-ho-appa could ride through the fair hunting-grounds of the skies. A coffin was made and lavishly decorated. The body was not unbound from its deer-skin shroud, but was wrapped in a bright red blanket and placed in the coffin." The ceremony was attended by officers and troops from the post, and the chaplain assisted, but Spotted Tail "wanted his daughter buried Indian fashion, so that she would go not where the white people went, but where the red people went." The coffin was carried to the hill, near the grave of Old Smoke, and soon "each of the Indian women came up, one at a time, and talked to Ah-ho-appa; some of them whispered to her long and earnestly, as if they were by her sending some hopeful message to a lost child. Each one put some little remembrance in the coffin; one put a little looking-glass, another a string of colored beads, another a pine cone with some sort of an embroidery of sinew in it. Then the lid was fastened on and the women took the coffin and raised it and placed it on the scaffold. The Indian men stood mutely and stolidly around looking on, and none of them moved a muscle or tendered any help. A fresh buffalo skin was laid over the coffin and bound down to the sides of the scaffold with thongs. The scaffold was within the military square, as was also the twelve-pound howitzer. The sky was leaden and stormy, and it began to sleet and grow dark. At the word of command the soldiers faced outward and discharged three volleys in rapid succession. They and their visitors then marched back to the post. The howitzer squad remained and built a large fire of pine wood, and fired the gun every half-hour all night, through the sleet, until daybreak." (Gleed, pp. 36–38.)

Fort Laramie was one of the most important posts in the great western country. A photograph of the post, showing the group of buildings, made in 1868, is reproduced in Plate 12, and in Plate 13 is shown one of the log structures at the fort, "Brown's Hotel," as it appeared at the same time. From the very beginning the fort was a gathering place for traders and Indians, later to become a resting place for emigrants on their slow, toilsome journey to the region beyond the mountains. It was likewise visited by some seeking knowledge of the ways of life of the people of the wilderness, Indians and whites, and it is quite evident many interesting and remarkable scenes were witnessed both within and without the walls

of this crude frontier structure. It stood in the midst of a region roamed over by several hostile tribes, enemies of each other, and all of whom were treacherous in their dealings with the whites. Many who died when encamped near the fort were buried near by. Others who died at a distance were carried by their friends and placed in the cemetery near the fort, as was the body of Ah-ho-appa, the daughter of Spotted Tail, during the early part of the year 1866. Just 20 years before, late in the spring of 1846, Francis Parkman and his companions spent some days at Fort Laramie during their adventurous journey through the Indian country. He saw the curious scaffolds scattered over the prairie in the vicinity of the fort, and wrote in his narrative:

"As we were looking, at sunset, from the wall, upon the wild and desolate plains that surround the fort, we observed a cluster of strange objects, like scaffolds, rising in the distance against the red western sky. They bore aloft some singular-looking burdens; and at their foot glimmered something white like bones. This was the place of sepulture of some Dahcotah chiefs, whose remains their people are fond of placing in the vicinity of the fort, in the hope that they may thus be protected from violation at the hands of their enemies. Yet it has happened more than once, and quite recently, that war parties of the Crow Indians, ranging through the country, have thrown the bodies from the scaffolds, and broken them to pieces, amid the yells of the Dahcotahs, who remained pent up in the fort, too few to defend the honored relics from insult. The white objects upon the ground were buffalo-skulls, arranged in the mystic circle, commonly seen at Indian places of sepulture upon the prairie." (Parkman, pp. 128–129.)

Parkman mentioned the death of an Indian woman, a member of a small party moving from their village to a camp some miles away. She was very ill, and early in the day, when the party was preparing to proceed on their journey, "she was lifted into a *travail*." Later in the day she failed rapidly, and soon "lay dead in the basket of the vehicle." This was quite similar, undoubtedly, to the beautiful example shown in Plate 7. The relatives of the woman were required by custom to secure "valuable presents, to be placed by the side of the body at its last resting-place," and two members of the party immediately set forward to obtain the necessary and desired objects. "It was very late and quite dark when they again reached the lodges. They were all placed in a deep hollow among the dreary hills. Four of them were just visible through the gloom, but the fifth and largest was illuminated by the ruddy blaze of a fire within, glowing through the half-transparent covering of raw-hides. There was a perfect stillness as they approached. The lodges seemed

without a tenant. Not a living thing was stirring,—there was something awful in the scene. They rode up to the entrance of the lodge, and there was no sound but the tramp of their horses. A squaw came out and took charge of the animals, without speaking a word. Entering, they found the lodge crowded with Indians; a fire was burning in the midst, and the mourners encircled it in a triple row. Room was made for the new-comers at the head of the lodge, a robe spread for them to sit upon, and a pipe lighted and handed to them in perfect silence. Thus they passed the greater part of the night. At times the fire would subside into a heap of embers, until the dark figures seated around it were scarcely visible; then a squaw would drop upon it a piece of buffalo-fat, and a bright flame instantly springing up, would reveal on a sudden the crowd of wild faces, motionless as bronze. The silence continued unbroken . . . they placed the presents they had brought near the body of the squaw, which, most gaudily attired, remained in a sitting posture in one of the lodges. A fine horse was picketed not far off, destined to be killed that morning for the service of her spirit, for the woman was lame, and could not travel on foot over the dismal prairies to the villages of the dead. Food, too, was provided, and household implements, for her use upon this last journey." (Parkman, pp. 165–167.)

The father of the squaw was "Mahto-Tatonka, who had transmitted his names, his features, and many of his characteristic qualities, to his son." Later, while at the camp, so Parkman wrote: "For several nights . . . we could hear wild and mournful cries, rising and dying away like the melancholy voice of a wolf. They came from the sisters and female relatives of Mahto-Tatonka, who were gashing their limbs with knives, and bewailing the death of" the squaw (p. 188). And soon again, when the people of the village had come together, "Mahto-Tatonka and his brothers took no part in this parade, for they were in mourning for their sister, and were all sitting in their lodges, their bodies bedaubed from head to foot with white clay, and a lock of hair cut from each of their foreheads." (Op. cit., pp. 195–196.)

Unfortunately, and it is certainly to be regretted, Parkman did not witness the actual disposition of the remains, the placing of the body on the scaffold, and the sacrifice of the horse. The various customs mentioned were probably those of all the Siouan tribes of the region.

It is quite evident numerous platforms, supporting the remains of the dead, were erected in many trees in the vicinity of Laramie. But the trees, of sufficient size, were scattered and much of the region was barren and open, with scant timber, affording little protection to man or beast. Fortunately, several very interesting and

undoubtedly very characteristic views of tree burials near Laramie are preserved. Two photographs made during the year 1868 are reproduced in Plate 14. It is interesting to see the large tree in *a*, Plate 14, again shown in the second photograph, but in the distance and at a different angle.

The photograph reproduced in Plate 15 has not been identified. It may, however, have been made near Laramie. This is of special interest, as the platform supporting the body or bodies is resting partly on the branches of the tree and partly on a stout post placed in an upright position. This is rather a combination of scaffold and tree burial.

A communication addressed by W. J. Cleveland, of the Spotted Tail Agency, Nebr., to Doctor Yarrow, gave a remarkably valuable and interesting account of the burial customs of the Brulés. It serves to verify, as well as to make more clear, certain statements made by other writers which have been quoted. Cleveland wrote in part: "Though some few of this tribe now lay their dead in rude boxes, either burying them when implements for digging can be had, or, when they have no means of making a grave, placing them on top of the ground on some hill or other slight elevation, yet this is done in imitation of the whites, and their general custom, as a people, probably does not differ in any essential way from that of their forefathers for many generations in the past. In disposing of the dead, they wrap the body tightly in blankets or robes (sometimes both), wind it all over with thongs made of the hide of some animal, and place it, reclining on the back at full length, either in the branches of some tree or on a scaffold made for the purpose. These scaffolds are about eight feet high, and made by planting four forked sticks firmly in the ground, one at each corner, and then placing others across on top, so as to form a floor, on which the body is securely fastened. Sometimes more than one body is placed on the same scaffold, though generally a separate one is made for each occasion. The Indians being in all things most superstitious, attach a kind of sacredness to these scaffolds and all the materials used on or about the dead. This superstition is in itself sufficient to prevent any of their own people from disturbing the dead, and for one of another nation to in any wise meddle with them is considered an offense not too severely punished by death.

"The same feeling also prevents them from ever using old scaffolds or any of the wood which has been used about them, even for firewood, though the necessity may be very great, for fear some evil consequences will follow. It is also the custom, though not universally followed, when bodies have been for two years on the scaffolds

to take them down and bury them under ground." (Yarrow, pp. 158–159.) Continuing, the account tells of the work of the women and in this respect agrees with the narrative of the burial of Ah-ho-appa, as told on a preceding page. To again quote: "All the work about winding up the dead, building the scaffold, and placing the dead upon it is done by women only, who, after having finished their labor, return and bring the men, to show them where the body is placed, that they may be able to find it in future. Valuables of all kinds, such as weapons, ornaments, pipes, &c., in short, whatever the deceased valued most highly while living, and locks of hair cut from the heads of the mourners at his death, are always bound up with the body. In case the dead was a man of importance, or if the family could afford it, even though he were not, one or several horses (generally, in the former case, those which the departed thought most of) were shot and placed under the scaffold . . . A body is seldom kept longer than one day, as besides the desire to get the dead out of sight, the fear that the disease which caused the death will communicate itself to others of the family causes them to hasten the disposition of it as soon as they are certain that death has actually taken place."

The friends and relatives of the deceased, those who would mourn his death, expressed their grief in various ways, and "in uttering the most heartrending, almost hideous wails and lamentations, in which all join until exhausted." Others would "cut themselves in various places, generally in the legs and arms, with their knives or pieces of flint, more commonly the latter, causing the blood to flow freely over their person." After death the mourners would not touch food until after the burial of the body. The remaining property of the deceased would be given away; often the lodge would become the possession of some woman who assisted in the burial ceremony. "The custom of placing food at the scaffold also prevails to some extent. If but little is placed there it is understood to be for the spirit of the dead, and no one is allowed to touch it. If much is provided, it is done with the intention that those of the same sex and age as the deceased shall meet there and consume it. If the dead be a little girl, the young girls meet and eat what is provided; if it be a man, then men assemble for the same purpose. The relatives never mention the name of the dead." (Op. cit., p. 160.)

The curious and strange custom of preserving a small quantity of the hair of the deceased, wrapped and bound in cloth or skins, and which was termed "the ghost," as mentioned in the preceding notes on the Sisseton and Wahpeton, was likewise observed among the Brulés. In the article written from the Spotted Tail Agency, some time before the year 1879, it was told that "another custom,

though at the present day by no means generally followed, is still observed to some extent among them. This is called *wanagee yuhapee*, or 'keeping the ghost.' A little of the hair from the head of the deceased being preserved is bound up in calico and articles of value until the roll is about two feet long and ten inches or more in diameter, when it is placed in a case made of hide handsomely ornamented with various designs in different colored paints. When the family is poor, however, they may substitute for this case a blue or scarlet blanket or cloth. The roll is then swung lengthwise between two supports made of sticks, placed thus X in front of a lodge which has been set apart for the purpose. In this lodge are gathered presents of all kinds, which are given out when a sufficient quantity is obtained. It is often a year and sometimes several years before this distribution is made. During all this time the roll containing the hair of the deceased is left undisturbed in front of the lodge. The gifts as they are brought in are piled in the back part of the lodge, and are not to be touched until given out. No one but men and boys are admitted to the lodge unless it be a wife of the deceased, who may go in if necessary very early in the morning. The men sit inside, as they choose, to smoke, eat, and converse. As they smoke they empty the ashes from their pipes in the center of the lodge, and they, too, are left undisurbed until after the distribution. When they eat, a portion is always placed first under the roll outside for the spirit of the deceased. No one is allowed to take this unless a large quantity is so placed, in which case it may be eaten by any persons actually in need of food, even though strangers to the dead. When the proper time comes the friends of the deceased and all to whom presents are to be given are called together to the lodge and the things are given out by the man in charge. Generally this is some near relative of the departed. The roll is now undone and small locks of the hair distributed with the other presents, which ends the ceremony." (Op. cit., p. 160.) The article continues and sheds additional light on the beliefs of the people respecting *wanagee yuhapee*. It was sometimes repeated, in which event it was regarded "as a repetition of the burial or putting away of the dead." The lodge in which the presents were kept, and where the roll was suspended, was considered in the light of a sacred spot until after the distribution of the material. No friend or relative desired to possess anything that had belonged to the deceased. Much was deposited with the body, and much was given away. "They have no idea of a future life in the body, but believe that after death their spirits will meet and recognize the spirits of their departed friends in the spirit land."

Such were the strange beliefs of this roving people of the prairies.

Through the kindness of Francis La Flesche I am able to give a reproduction of a sketch made by Miss Alice C. Fletcher of a death scene among the Brulés, on Rosebud Reservation, S. Dak. (Pl. 16.) The scene, or rather ceremony, was witnessed by Miss Fletcher during her first journey into the Indian country and is dated October 18, 1881. In her journal the ceremony was thus described:

"On the morning of October 18, 1881, a Sioux Indian died suddenly. The nearest of kin goes out of the door and calls: 'A forerunner has gone to the spirit land, come and meet him.' His best horse is shot as soon as possible. The wives open their packs and empty their store of calicos, beadwork, &c., these are thrown on the railing beside the tent.

"The man held the drum of the Fox club. He belonged also to the Omaha club. His horse lay dead as in the sketch. The row of heads were men of the Omaha club, these chanted long and low, the death song. His dog came out, these men shot it. It turned and cried piteously. It ran up the hill and there died. One of the men dragged it down and it lay as in the sketch. The tent was open. There was some sort of feather ornament hanging over his head. This was his war bonnet. The calicos and bead work hanging on the railing were distributed among the members of the club and the women. The women relatives cut their hair and placed it on the body—this is buried with the person. I saw all the household utensils being carried away. Nothing will be left in the tent.

"Just before the man called out the gifts of horses, I noticed a man clad in a light blanket lean over the dead man and paint his face red and yellow. When this was done he called out the horses given away. The man was buried in the afternoon, his knife, pistol, drum and bow put with him."

The horse was later dragged to the place of burial while the dog furnished food for a feast.

The preceding is one of the most interesting accounts of a death scene among the Siouan tribes ever prepared, and being accompanied by a drawing adds greatly to its importance.

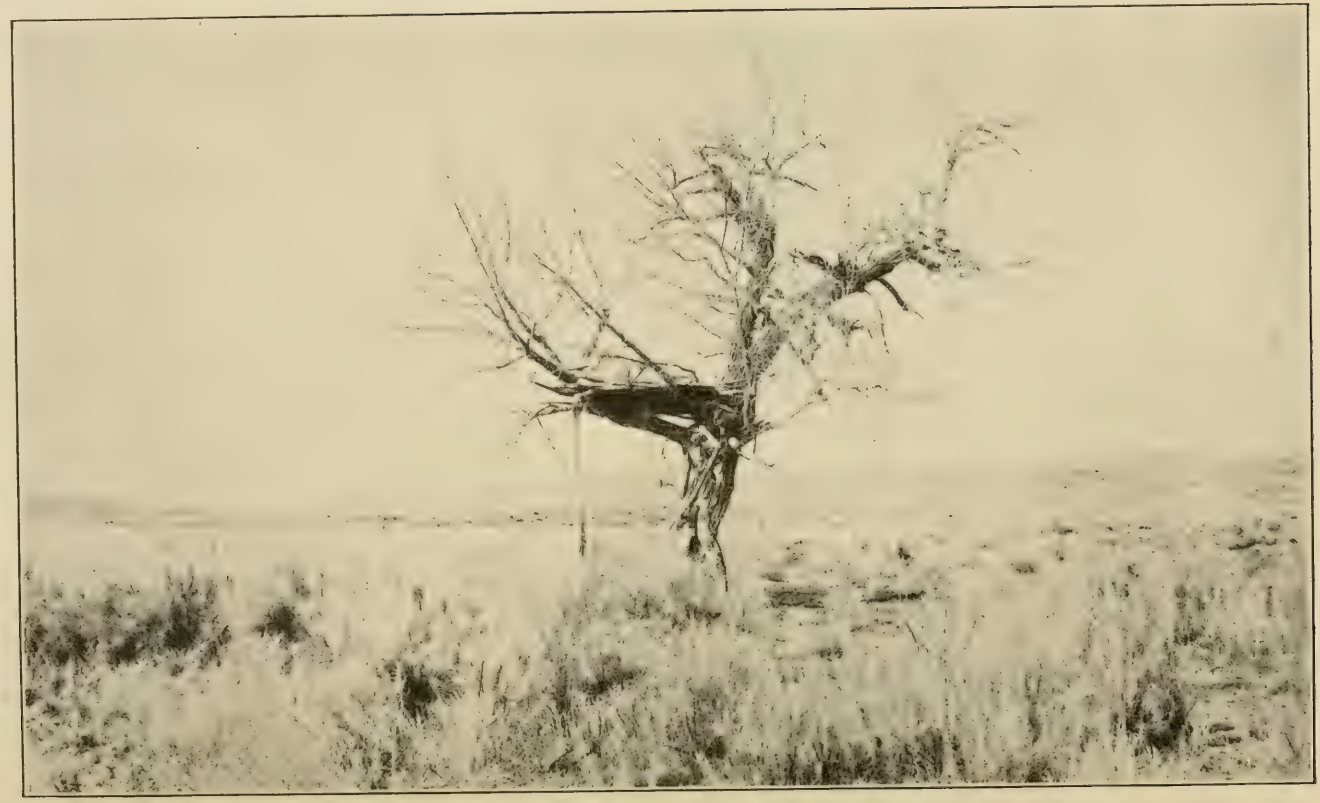
Oglala

The Oglala, the principal division of the Teton Sioux, during the years since they became known to the traders and explorers have been a roving people, moving about over a wide region and seldom remaining long in any one locality. Their dead, and evidently in some instances the dying as well, were abandoned when a village was moved, and many tree burials discovered in the vicinity of Fort Laramie may be attributed to these roving bands. Camps of

a

b

TREE BURIALS NEAR FORT LARAMIE, 1868



COMBINED TREE AND SCAFFOLD BURIAL, PROBABLY NEAR FORT LARAMIE

DEATH SCENE AMONG THE BRULÉS

On the Rosebud Reservation, S. Dak., 1881

TOMBS OF ASSINIBOIN INDIANS ON TREES

After painting by Karl Bodmer, 1833

the Oglala had undoubtedly stood on the banks of the two forks of the Platte in the present Keith County, Nebr., a few days before the arrival of the Stansbury party early in the summer of 1849.

On July 2, 1849, they crossed the South Fork of the Platte, and to quote from the journal: "About one and a half miles above the crossing a new Indian lodge was seen standing entirely alone. A fact so unusual excited our curiosity: upon going to the place, it was found to contain the body of an Indian (probably a chief) raised upon a low platform or bier, surrounded by all the implements believed by these simple children of the forest to be necessary for his use in the spirit-land. The lodge was carefully and securely fastened down at the bottom, to protect its charge from the wolves. It was an affecting spectacle." (Stansbury, p. 40.) This may have been the usual and customary manner of disposing of the dead in a region where trees were scattered and timber scarce. Two days later, on July 4, the party had traversed the country between the two forks, arriving at the south bank of the North Fork of the Platte. Again quoting from the journal: "We had observed yesterday, on the opposite side of the river, a number of Indian lodges, pitched on the bank; but the total absence of any living or moving thing about them induced us from curiosity to pay them a visit. In order to do this it was necessary to cross the river, here nearly a mile in breadth, with a strong, rapid current." The passage of the stream was made with great difficulty, swimming and wading, with the treacherous sands and swift water, but reaching the shore "I put on my moccasins, and, displaying my wet shirt, like a flag, to the wind, we proceeded to the lodges which had attracted our curiosity. There were five of them, pitched upon the open prairie, and in them we found the bodies of nine Sioux, laid out upon the ground, wrapped in their robes of buffalo-skin, with their saddles, spears, camp-kettles, and all their accoutrements, piled up around them. Some lodges contained three, others only one body, all of which were more or less in a state of decomposition. A short distance apart from these was one lodge which, though small, seemed of rather superior pretensions, and was evidently pitched with great care. It contained the body of a young Indian girl of sixteen or eighteen years, with a countenance presenting quite an agreeable expression: she was richly dressed in leggings of fine scarlet cloth, elaborately ornamented; a new pair of moccasins, beautifully embroidered with porcupine quills, was on her feet, and her body was wrapped in two superb buffalo-robes worked in like manner. She had evidently been dead but a day or two; and to our surprise a portion of the upper part of her person was bare, exposing the face and part of the breast, as if the robes in which she was wrapped had by some means been disarranged, whereas all the other bodies were closely covered

up. . . . I subsequently learned that they had all died of the cholera, and that this young girl, being considered past recovery, had been arrayed by her friends in the habiliments of the dead, enclosed in the lodge alive, and abandoned to her fate—so fearfully alarmed were the Indians by this, to them, novel and terrible disease." (Op. cit., pp. 42–43.)

The following reference from Yarrow may have referred, in part, to the Oglala: "General Stewart Van Vliet, U. S. A., informs the writer that among the Sioux of Wyoming and Nebraska when a person of consequence dies a small scaffold is erected inside his lodge and the body wrapped in skins deposited therein. Different utensils and weapons are placed by his side, and in front a horse is slaughtered; the lodge is then closed up." (Yarrow, p. 153.) This was, however, merely a protection of the scaffold burial. The body was probably placed exactly as it would have been if exposed to the elements, without the scant and necessarily rather temporary protection afforded by the skin-covered lodge.

ASSINIBOIN

It is quite evident the Assiniboin, about the first years of the seventeenth century, moved northward from the densely forested region surrounding the headwaters of the Mississippi, where they had formed a division of the Yanktonai, to the vicinity of the Lake of the Woods and beyond, where they soon became allied with the Cree. They continued to move northward and westward, and by the close of the century were living in the region about Lake Winnipeg. A hundred years later they were occupying widely scattered villages near the banks of the Assiniboin and Saskatchewan Rivers. Later the region just mentioned was occupied by the northern division of the tribe, while others dominated a section of the extreme upper Valley of the Missouri.

In the year 1775 Alexander Henry reached the scattered camps of the Assiniboin. He became well acquainted with the peculiar manners and ways of life of the people, and it is evident he was a careful observer. His reference to the burial customs are here quoted at length: "With respect to the burial of the dead, if the death happen in the winter-season, and at a distance from the burial-ground of the family, the body invariably accompanies all the wanderings and journeys of the survivors, till the spring, and till their arrival at the place of interment. In the mean time, it is every where rested on a scaffold, out of the reach of beasts of prey. The grave is made of a circular form, about five feet deep, and lined with bark of the birch, or some other tree, or with skins. A seat is prepared, and the body is placed in a sitting posture, with supporters on either side. If the

deceased be a man, his weapons of war, and of the chase, are buried with him, as also his shoes, and every thing for which, as a living warrior or hunter, he would have occasion, and, indeed, all his property; and I believe that those, whose piety alone may not be strong enough to ensure to the dead their entire inventory of what is supposed to be necessary for them, or is their own, are compelled to do them justice by another argument, and which is, the fear of their displeasure. A defrauded or neglected ghost, although invisible, can disperse the game of the plains or forests, so that the hunter shall hunt in vain; and, either in the chase or in the war, turn aside the arrow, or palsy the arm that draws the bow; in the lodge, it can throw a child into the fire.

"The body and its accompaniments are covered with bark; the bark with logs; and the logs with earth. This done, a relation stands up, and pronounces an eulogium on the deceased, extolling his virtues, and relating his exploits. He dwells upon the enemies whom he slew, the scalps and prisoners which he took, his skill and industry in the chase, and his deportment as a father, husband, son, brother, friend, and member of the community. At each assertion which he makes, the speaker strikes a post, which is placed near the grave; a gesture of asseveration, and which enforces the attention of the audience, and assists in counting up the points delivered. The eulogium finished, the post is painted, and on it are represented the number of prisoners taken, by so many figures of men; and of killed and scalped, by figures without heads. To these are added his badge, called, in the Algonquin tongue, a *totem*, and which is in the nature of an armorial bearing. It informs the passing Indian of the family to which the deceased belonged. A serious duty at the grave, is that of placing food, for the use of the dead, on the journey to the *land of souls*. This care is never neglected, even under every disadvantage of molestation. In the neighbourhood of the traders, dishes of cooked venison are very commonly placed on the graves of the long buried, and as commonly removed by Europeans, even without offence to those who placed them there. In situations of great want, I have more than once resorted to them for food." (Henry, pp. 303–305.)

On January 22, 1821, during the season of extreme cold, when the entire face of the country was covered with snow and ice, the body of an Indian was placed upon a scaffold erected in the vicinity of Brandon House, a post of the Hudson's Bay Co., erected in 1794, on the south side of the Assiniboin about 17 miles below the present Brandon.

As described by one who witnessed the simple ceremony: "I saw an Indian corpse staged, or put upon a few cross sticks, about ten feet from the ground, at a short distance from the fort. The property of the dead, which may consist of a kettle, axe, and a few addi-

tional articles, is generally put into the case, or wrapped in a buffalo skin with the body, under the idea that the deceased will want them, or that the spirit of these articles will accompany the departed spirit in travelling to another world. And whenever they visit the stage or burying-place, which they frequently do for years afterwards, they will encircle it, smoke their pipes, weep bitterly, and in their sorrow, cut themselves with knives, or pierce themselves with the points of sharp instruments." (West, p. 33.) The preceding note would conform with Henry's account already quoted, and it is quite evident that throughout the northern country the remains of those who died during the winter months, when the ground was frozen to a depth of several feet, were placed upon scaffolds. At other seasons the bodies were deposited in excavated graves. As West later states: "They have a burial ground at the Settlement, and usually put the property of the deceased into the grave with the corpse. If any remains, it is given away from an aversion they have to use any thing that belonged to their relations who have died. Some of the graves are very neatly covered over with short sticks and bark as a kind of canopy, and a few scalps are affixed to poles that are stuck in the ground at the head of several of them. You see also occasionally at the grave, a piece of wood on which is either carved or painted the symbols of the tribe the deceased belonged to, and which are taken from the different animals of the country." (Op. cit., pp. 55–56.) The "Settlement" mentioned above was that of the Red River colony, and certain of the graves described in this brief general account were probably of Cree or Sauteux Indians. The description at once suggests the photographs made by the Hind party a generation later and which are shown in Plates 2 and 3.

On April 7, 1805, the Lewis and Clark party left their winter quarters near the Mandan villages, below the mouth of Knife River, where they had arrived late in October of the preceding year. They continued to ascend the Missouri, passed the mouth of the Little Missouri, and about 20 miles beyond encountered the remains of a temporary encampment of 43 lodges, which they believed to have been occupied by a party of Assiniboin. During the days following other camps of the same tribe were discovered, and in some instances tree burials were seen near by. April 20 they had advanced to within a few miles of the mouth of White Earth River, and that day, so it is written in the journal: "In walking through the neighbouring plains we found a fine fertile soil . . . Our hunters procured elk and deer which are now lean, and six beaver which are fatter and more palatable. Along the plain there were also some Indian camps; near one of these was a scaffold about seven feet high, on which were two sleds with their harness, and under it the

body of a female, carefully wrapped in several dressed buffaloe skins; near it lay a bag made of buffaloe skin, containing a pair of moccasins, some red and blue paint, beaver's nails, scrapers for dressing hides, some dried roots, several plaits of sweet grass, and a small quantity of Mandan tobacco. These things as well as the body itself had probably fallen down by accident, as the custom is to place them on the scaffold. At a little distance was the body of a dog not yet decayed, who had met this reward for having dragged thus far in the sled the corpse of his mistress, to whom according to the Indian usage he had been sacrificed." (Lewis and Clark, I, pp. 191–192.) It is possible the woman had died some distance from the spot where her body was discovered, it having been wrapped and placed on the sled.

Several very interesting references to the beliefs and burial customs of the Assiniboin are to be found in Maximilian's narrative. They "believe that the dead go to a country in the south, where the good and brave find women and buffaloes, while the wicked or cowardly are confined to an island, where they are destitute of all the pleasures of life. Those who, during their lives, have conducted themselves bravely, are not to be deposited in trees when they die, but their corpses are to be laid on the ground, it being taken for granted that, in case of need, they will help themselves. Of course they are then generally devoured by the wolves, to secure them from which, however, they are covered with wood and stones. Other corpses are usually placed on trees, as among the Sioux, and sometimes on scaffolds. They are tied up in buffalo hides, and three or four are sometimes laid in one tree." (Maximilian, p. 197.) And on July 1, 1833, in the timber below Fort Union, "we found a tree, on which the corpses of several Assiniboins were deposited; one of them had fallen down, and been torn and devoured by the wolves. The blankets which covered the body were new, and partly bedaubed with red paint, and some of the branches and the trunk of the tree were coloured in the same manner. Dreidoppel, who discovered this tree, took up the skull of a young Assiniboin, in which a mouse had made its nest for its young; and Mr. Bodmer made an accurate drawing of the tree, under which there was a close thicket of roses in full blossom, the fragrant flowers of which seemed destined to veil this melancholy scene of human frailty and folly." (Op. cit., p. 205.) The sketch made by Bodmer was reproduced by Maximilian and is here given at Plate 17.

To paint the tree upon which the body rested was evidently an established custom among the Assiniboin who frequented the banks of the upper Missouri, and red was the color thus employed. Some miles above Fort Union, on July 13, 1833, Maximilian discovered the remains of an Assiniboin wrapped in skins, resting upon the

sloping trunk of a tree, from the branches of which hung a saddle and stirrups. And most interesting is the remark, "the tree itself was painted red."

Brief references to the treatment of the sick are contained in the same journal. In one of the lodges of the Assiniboin camp, near Fort Union, a man was quite ill, medicine men were gathered around him, "singing with all their might. Many people had collected about this tent, and were peeping through the crevices. After the conjuration had continued some time, the tent was opened, and the men who had been assembled in it went away by threes, the one in the middle always stepping a little before the others, and they continued singing till they reached their own tents . . ." The following day "In the afternoon we again heard the Indian drum beating very loud in the tent of the sick man, and we went there to see their conjurations. We looked cautiously through the crevices in the tent, and saw the patient sitting on the floor, his head, covered with a small cap, sunk upon his breast, and several men standing around him. Two of the medicine men were beating the drum in quick time, and a third rattled the Quakemuha (or Shishikue), which he waved up and down. These people were singing with great effort; sometimes they uttered short ejaculations, and were in a violent perspiration; sometimes they sucked the places where the patient felt pain, and pretended they could suck out or remove the morbid matter." (Op. cit., pp. 204–205.)

Few persons were as well acquainted with the peculiar customs and understood the characteristics of the native tribes of the Upper Missouri Valley as did the great missionary Father De Smet. He traversed the country during all seasons of the year, visited the Indians in their widely scattered camps, and in many instances became their friend and comforter. In letters written just 70 years ago he made several interesting references to the burial customs of the Assiniboin with whom he came in contact, and likewise mentioned their belief of conditions as they existed after death. Writing of the burial customs, or rather of their method of disposing of the dead, he said: "The Assiniboins never bury their dead. They bind the bodies with thongs of raw hide between the branches of large trees, and more frequently place them on scaffolds, to protect them from the wolves and other wild animals. They are higher than a man can reach. The feet are always turned to the west. There they are left to decay. When the scaffolds or the trees to which the dead are attached fall, through old age, the relatives bury all the other bones, and place the skulls in a circle in the plain, with the faces turned towards the centre. They preserve these with care, and consider them objects of religious veneration. You will generally find there several bison skulls. In the centre stands the medi-

cine-pole, about twenty feet high, to which Wah-kons are hung, to guard and protect the sacred deposit. The Indians call the cemetery the *village of the dead*. They visit it at certain seasons of the year, to converse affectionately with their deceased relatives and friends, and always leave some present." (De Smet, p. 204.)

It will prove of interest at this time to add a few words in connection with the career of that great worker among the Indians, Père de Smet. On June 16, 1851, the young Swiss traveler Friedrich Kurz was at or near the present Omaha, when he went aboard the Missouri River packet *St. Ange*, Captain La Barge, bound for the upper Missouri. Kurz entered in his journal that day: "The steamer is really a hospital for victims of cholera—the sick and the dying." The following day he wrote: "No doctor on board; two more deaths since yesterday. Evans, a professor in Geology, prepared the remedy (meal mixed with whisky) that I administered. Father Van Hocken bestows spiritual consolation. Father de Smet is, also, not well, but he is not suffering from cholera . . ." And three days later, June 21, 1851, Kurz wrote in his diary: "Pere Van Hocken dead. He died as a Christian. He had been sick only two hours. It was about 4 o'clock in the morning, when I was awakened by his calling me. I found him, half dressed, on his bed in a violent convulsion. I called Pere de Smet. We anchored in the evening and buried him by torchlight. Pere Hocken was to have gone as a missionary to the Nezperces. And I had not sketched his portrait for Pere de Smet." The following day the *St. Ange* passed Floyd's grave. It is interesting to find among Kurz's numerous sketches a portrait of Father de Smet made at this time, days of great anxiety to all. The sketch is reproduced in Plate 18, *a*. A drawing of an Assiniboin, made by Kurz at Fort Union, November 16, 1851, is given on the same plate.

The painting by Catlin, made in the vicinity of the Mandan village some years before the preceding notes by Father De Smet were prepared, and which is now reproduced in Plate 26, agrees in every detail with the Assiniboin manner of placing the skulls in a circle on the prairie, with several buffalo skulls within the circle, and with poles from which an offering was suspended. It is quite evident the customs of the two tribes were similar. Referring to other beliefs of the tribe, Father de Smet wrote: "The belief in ghosts is very profound, and common in all the tribes. Indians have often told me, seriously, that they had met, seen, and conversed with them, and that they may be heard almost every night in the places where the dead are interred. They say they speak in a kind of whistling tone. Sometimes they contract the face like a person in an epileptic fit. Nothing but the hope of gain could ever induce an Indian to go alone in a burying-ground at night. In such a case, love of gain might

triumph over the fear of ghosts; but an Indian woman would never be induced, on any condition, to enter one." This may have referred to the Mandan and other tribes of the upper Missouri, as well as to the Assiniboin. Again having in mind the Assiniboin in particular, he wrote: "The Assiniboins esteem greatly a religious custom of assembling once or twice in the year around the tombs of their immediate relatives. These sepulchres are raised on a species of scaffold, about seven or eight feet above the surface of the soil. The Indians call the dead by their names, and offer them meats carefully dressed, which they place beside them. They take care, however, to consume the best pieces themselves . . . The ceremony of burying the dead, among the Indians, is terminated by the tears, wailings, howlings, and macerations of all present. They tear the hair, gash their legs, and at last the calumet is lighted, for this is the Alpha and Omega of every rite. They offer it to the shades of the departed, and entreat them not to injure the living. During their ceremonious repasts, in their excursions, and even at a great distance from their tombs, they send to the dead puffs of tobacco-smoke and burn little pieces of meat as a sacrifice in their memory." (Op. cit., pp. 140–141.)

Touching on the Assiniboin belief of existence after death, Father De Smet wrote: "In regard to the future state, they believe that the souls of the dead migrate towards the South, where the climate is mild, the game abundant, and the rivers well stocked with fish. Their hell is the reverse of this picture; its unfortunate inmates dwell in perpetual snow and ice, and in the complete deprivation of all things. There are, however, many among them who think death is the cessation of life and action, and that there is naught beyond it." (Op. cit., pp. 141–142.) Thus, like other tribes of the North, who suffered by reason of the great cold of the long winters, the Assiniboin pictured the home of the good after death in a region to the southward; a region of warmth, where food was plentiful and easily secured, and where suffering was unknown.

Another version of their belief was prepared in 1837, when it was told how "The Assiniboins believe, that in another life, to obtain enduring happiness, they have to climb a very high and steep mountain, the ascent of which is so difficult and dangerous that it requires many attempts, perseverance, and great fortitude to gain the summit, but once there a delightful and boundless plain is spread before them covered with eternal verdure and countless herds of Buffaloe and the other animals which they delight to hunt; and that they will find all their friends who left this life before them enjoying an uninterrupted course of happiness, dwelling in beautiful skin tents which ever appear new.

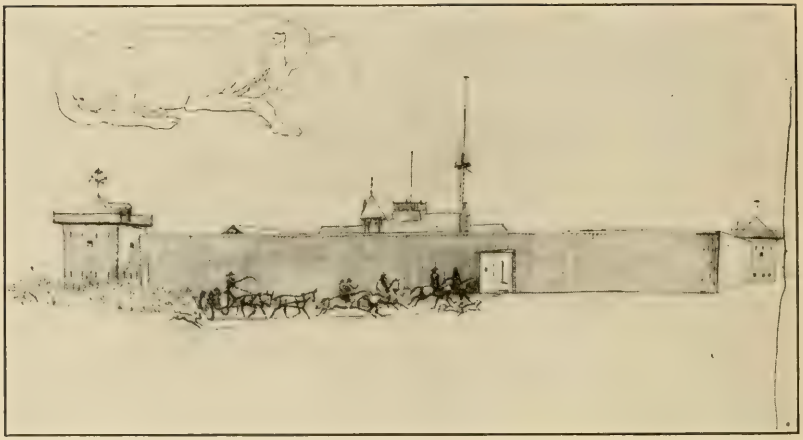
"Those who have done ill in this life and have been successful enough to gain the summit of the hill are there met by the dwellers

a. FATHER DE SMET, 1851

Sketch by Friedrich Kurz

b. ASSINIBOIN INDIAN AT FORT UNION, 1851

Sketch by Friedrich Kurz



a. EXTERIOR OF FORT UNION

b. INTERIOR OF FORT UNION

Drawings by Friedrich Kurz, 1851

FROM KURZ'S SKETCHBOOK

a. VIEW ON THE UPPER MISSOURI; BLACKBIRD'S GRAVE

After painting by George Catlin

b. VIEW FROM BLACKBIRD HILLS

Photograph by W. H. Jackson, 1871

of the happy plain, and those who knew them in this life, who bear witness against them. They are then immediately thrown down the steep and should their necks not be broken never again attempt an ascent.

"Those who have done good in this life are welcomed with unusual joy and immediately admitted to all the privileges of their never ending hunting and happiness." (McLeod, pp. 407–408.)

Two views of Fort Union, drawn by Kurz during the autumn of 1851, are reproduced in Plate 19. One shows the exterior, the gate open and evidently a party of hunters about to enter; the second represents the interior. The small circle above the main entrance was the position of a portrait of Chouteau. Kurz wrote in his diary September 30, 1851: "Have been hard at work. Had to paint, from a medal, the portrait of Pierre Chouteau, Jr., in the gable over the house gallery." The date, 1851, appears in the sketch just beneath the portrait. Sketches made by Kurz at this time are shown in Plate 20. One portrait is of "Culbertson, Esq. Bourgeois of Fort Mackenzie"; another is that of the Assiniboin chief Ours fou, who frequented Fort Union during Kurz's stay.

Ours fou had accompanied Culbertson to Fort Laramie to attend the great gathering of representatives of the Government and of members of many tribes, who came together during the month of September. On October 31, 1851, Kurz entered in his journal: "The unexpected often happens. Mr. Culbertson has at last arrived from Fort Laramie. We heard the glad news in the afternoon from *Ours fou* who had hurried on in advance to mourn with his family. Uncle Sam has appointed *Ours fou* chief of the Assiniboins; fate has robbed him, during his absence, of his wife—his only wife—of his son and two grandchildren. Anyone who saw this grief-stricken Chief would never speak of an Indian's lack of feeling . . . *Ours fou* was grieved to the soul, most profoundly affected; gazing before him in a kind of stupor, he wept silently. His hair and his body were besmeared, in token of his sorrow." And again on November 26: "*Ours fou*, chief of the Assiniboins, sits now beside me on the floor before the fire . . . He is uncovered; on his head, breast and legs are incisions in his skin to allow blood to flow as atonement for his deceased wife, his murdered son and beloved grandchildren." On October 27 Kurz had written: "Relatives of the three Assiniboin who were slain have planted a pole and fastened thereon two leather pouches that belonged to the dead. There for a long time they wailed and made blood-offerings by cutting their arms, cheeks, heads and legs until blood flowed. One of the dead men . . . was a son of the Assiniboin Chief *L'ours fou*, (Mad Bear.)" The wife of *Ours fou* killed herself through grief and her body was "brought on a travois drawn by a horse," to Fort Union, where it was placed in a grave.

Such were happenings at Fort Union during the autumn of 1851.

Dhegiha Group

Five tribes, the Omaha, Ponca, Quapaw, Osage, and Kansa, are regarded as forming this group of the Siouan family, quite distinct from those whose customs and ways of life have already been described. When first encountered by Europeans all were living west of the Mississippi, but it is quite evident their earlier habitat was in the central and upper parts of the Valley of the Ohio, whence they had moved westward. The cause of the general movement may never be determined, but it probably occurred only a few generations before the arrival of the French in the Valley of the Mississippi.

The old region occupied by the five tribes was a timbered country, where all undoubtedly reared and occupied mat-covered habitations, but after crossing the Mississippi the Omaha, Ponca, and Kansa continued on to the plains bordering the Missouri and there came in contact with other tribes from whom they acquired the art of constructing great earth lodges and the conical skin tipi. But the Osage and Quapaw remained in the timbered country and continued to construct and occupy mat and bark covered structures, undoubtedly similar to those reared by all the tribes in their old villages which stood in the Ohio Valley so long ago. Thus, the natural environments had much to do with determining the form of habitations reared by the several tribes after they crossed the Mississippi, and their burial customs were similarly influenced, as will be indicated by the following notes:

OMAHA

Interesting accounts of the burial and mourning customs of the primitive Omaha, as witnessed more than a century ago, are contained in the narrative of the Long expedition to the Rocky Mountains. To quote from the narrative: "When an Omawhaw dies, his kinsmen and friends assemble around his body, and bewail their loss with loud lamentation, weeping, and clapping of hands . . . They suffer the deceased to remain but a short time previously to interment, and often bear the body to the grave, before the warmth of vitality is entirely dissipated. The body is enveloped in a bison robe, or blanket, which is secured by a cord. It is then carried to the grave on the shoulders of two or three men, and followed by the greater portion of the mourners, without any order. The grave is an oblong square, of sufficient length, and four or five feet deep. The body is placed in the grave, and with it a pair or two of mockasins, some meat for food, and many little articles and comforts, the gifts of affection, to be used on the long journey which the deceased is supposed to be about to perform, in order to arrive at the Wa-noch-a-te, or town of brave and generous spirits. The grave is then filled

with earth, and a small tumulus is raised over it, proportioned in magnitude to the dignity of the deceased. The relatives bedaub their persons with white clay, scarify themselves with a flint, cut out pieces of their skin and flesh, pass arrows through their skin, and if on a march, they walk barefoot at a distance from their people, in testimony of the sincerity of their mourning.

"For a considerable time, they nightly visit the grave of the deceased, to lament over it. A sorrowing relative may be seen, of a bleak wintry night, bending over the grave, clad in a scanty robe, which scarcely conceals the middle of the back, as an additional self-punishment and unequivocal manifestation of grief.

"For the death of a brave warrior, or of a chief, the lamentation is more general, and many of those, who visit the body previous to its removal, present to it blankets, bison robes, breech-cloths, and mockasins, which are sometimes thus accumulated in considerable numbers; of these presents, part is retained by the orphans, if any, but the greater number is entombed with the body. Over the grave of a person of this description, a kind of roof or shelter is constructed, of pieces of wood reared against each other, and secured at top, then sodded over with grass sod.

"The season prescribed by custom for mourning, is a period of from seven to twelve months; during this time the violent expressions of their grief gradually diminish, and towards the expiration of the allotted season, the state of mourning is only manifested by the coating of white clay, and even this, like the black apparel of civilized mourners, is at length dispensed with, and with the same decorous gradation." (James, I, pp. 281–282.)

A woman, when her husband died, would usually give away practically all her possessions, then leave the village, and erect a small structure of grass and bark in which she would dwell apart from her friends for a period of six months or even a year. During this time she would cut off her hair and inflict other forms of self-punishment.

Referring to the Omaha's belief of conditions after death, the narrative relates that "This people believe firmly in an existence after death, but they do not appear to have any definite notions, as to the state in which they shall be. And although they say that many reappear after death, to their relatives, yet such visitants communicate no information respecting futurity. They consist of those only who have been killed, either in battle with an enemy, or in quarrels with individuals of their own nation, and their errand is to solicit vengeance on the perpetrators of the deed." And, continuing, "They say that after death, those who have conducted themselves properly in this life, are received into the Wa-noch-a-te,

or town of brave and generous spirits; but those who have not been useful to the nation, or their own families, by killing their enemies, stealing horses, or by generosity, will have a residence prepared for them in the town of poor and useless spirits; where, as well as in the good towns, their usual avocations are continued." (Op. cit., pp. 267–268.)

The great chief Blackbird, who lived and died before the Lewis and Clark expedition ascended the Missouri, was buried on the summit of the river cliffs, not far from the Omaha village. Catlin's very graphic sketch of the grave and of the surroundings is repro-

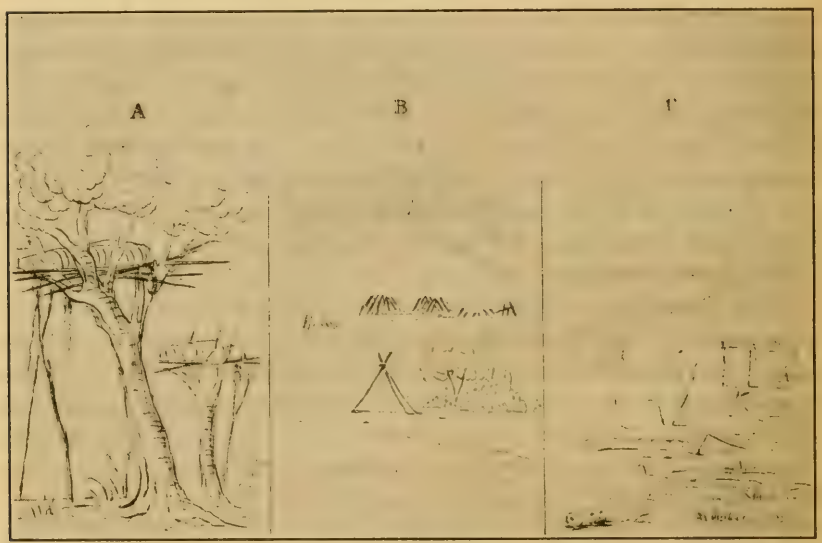


FIG. 3.—Various forms of burial. *A*. "The usual mode of the Omahas." *B*. Sioux burials, "They often deposit their dead on trees, and on scaffolds; but more generally bury in the tops of bluffs, or near their villages; when they often split out staves and drive in the ground around the grave, to protect it from the trespass of dogs or wild animals." *C*. "Shews the character of Mandan remains, that are met with in numerous places on the river." George Catlin, 1832

duced in Plate 21, *a*. The original picture is in the United States National Museum. During the summer of 1871 Jackson made a photograph of the river looking from the hill, and this is shown in Plate 21, *b*. A view of the cliff and grave, looking from the Missouri, made by Bodmer in 1833, is given in Plate 22.

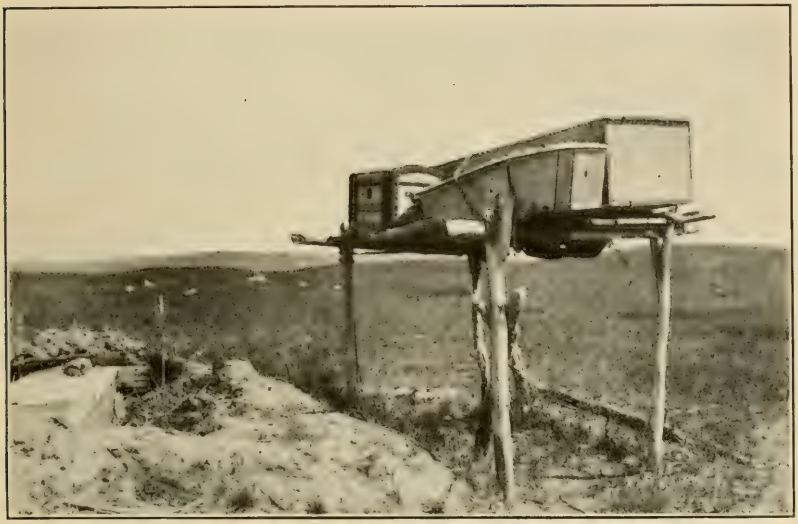
A group of more recent scaffold burials is shown in Plate 23, but unfortunately the date of the photograph has not been ascertained.

One of Catlin's illustrations is reproduced in Figure 3. One of the details, "*A*," shows what he in 1832 designated as the usual form of Omaha burial.

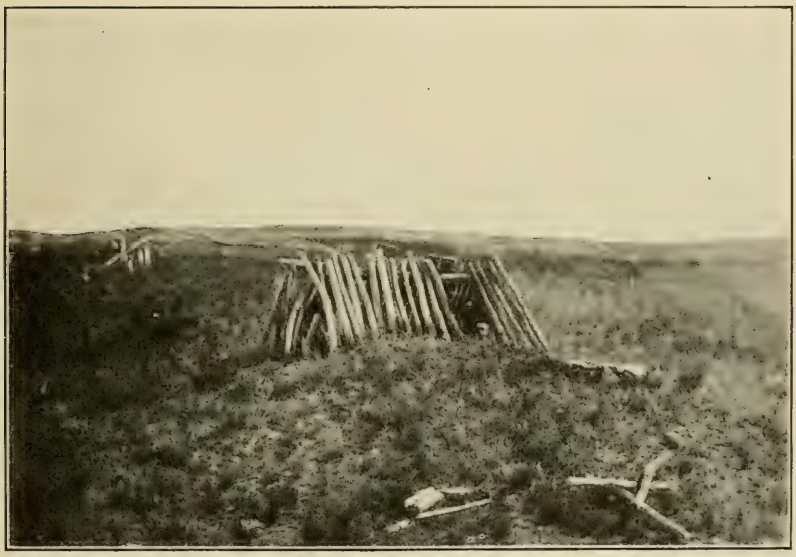
WASHINGA SAHBA'S GRAVE ON BLACKBIRD HILLS

After painting by Karl Bodmer, 1833

OMAHA BURIALS



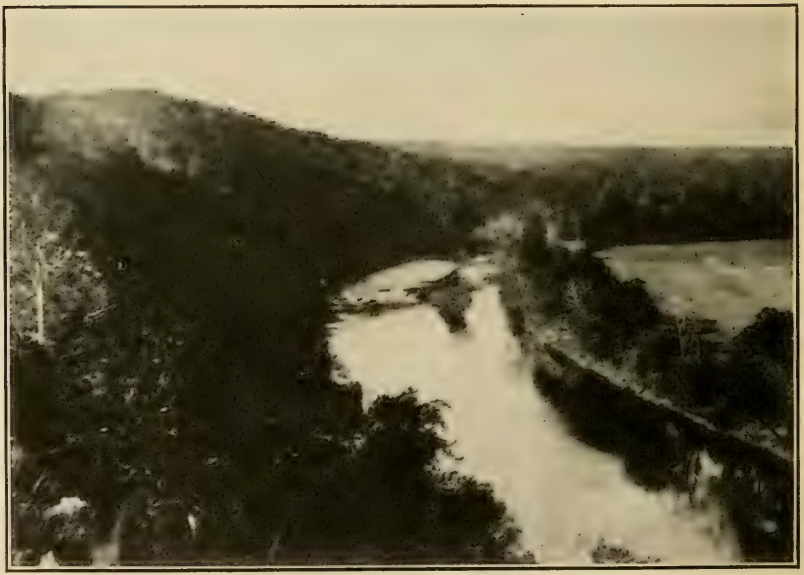
a. Scaffold holding several bodies



b. Graves protected by sticks

PONCA BURIALS

a. GRAVES IN AN OLD OSAGE CEMETERY, ON A RIDGE NEAR PAWHUSKA, OKLA.



b. THE GASCONADE RIVER, NEAR ARLINGTON, PHELPS COUNTY, MO.

PONCA

The Ponca and Omaha were formerly closely united, forming practically one tribe, few generations having passed since they became separated. Within historic times their villages resembled one another, and their customs and ways of life did not differ. They followed the same manner of disposing of their dead.

Unfortunately, very little can be found in the early narratives concerning the burial customs of the people. However, they were probably quite simple.

On May 12, 1833, the steamboat *Yellow Stone*, then ascending the Mississippi, arrived "in the vicinity of Basil Creek, where the Puncas formerly dwelt, numbers of whose graves are seen upon the hills." (Maximilian, p. 140.)

Interesting photographs of Ponca burials are shown in Plate 24. Unfortunately, the history of the pictures is not known.

KANSA

The Kansa, of all the Siouan tribes, reared and occupied the greatest variety of habitations. The earth-covered lodge, the skin tipi, and the frail structure of bark and mats, were made and used by different bands at different times. Their burial customs were more uniform, and evidently they disposed of their dead with very little ceremony. As stated by one well acquainted with the manners and customs of the Kansa: "The female relatives of the deceased take the entire charge of the dead, prepare the body for burial, dig the grave, take the body to the place of interment, and bury it without the presence of any men." And "if the deceased was a brave or a hunter his gun, saddle, bridle, blankets and other articles, supposed to be necessary for his use in the spirit world, were placed in the grave with his body, and his best horse strangled to death over his grave and left lying on it. For three nights succeeding his burial a light was kept burning at the head of his grave to give light to the soul on its passage to the Indian land of plenty and happiness, the happy hunting-ground, and for the same length of time food was placed at the head of the grave, upon which he, in some mysterious way, was supposed to feed until he reached his new and eternal home." (Spencer, p. 378.)

The preceding agrees with another account, one referring to a particular settlement: "The Kaws, while living at their old village near Manhattan, buried their dead in graves on the bottom land near the village, leaving no permanent markings of any kind which might lead to the identification of the spot. In later years, stones were heaped over the graves, to protect the bodies from wolves. Often a

horse was killed over the spot, whose spirit was supposed to convey that of the departed to the happy hunting grounds." (Griffing, pp. 134–135.)

A remarkably interesting and full account of the various ceremonies and customs of the Kansa, following the death of a member of the tribe, was given by Frederick Chouteau, who had been in contact with the people since the early years of the last century. To quote from the notes which were prepared in 1880: "When a member of a family dies, a warrior of the band to which the family belongs is chosen to make propitiation with the Great Spirit. He smears his face with mud and ashes, goes out in the morning to a high, lonely place, and sits there all day, crying and moaning, and blowing smoke toward heaven; eating and drinking nothing from morning till night. This he does every day for a month. The warrior then takes a body of warriors, sometimes to the number of 100, and goes out on a war expedition against some hostile tribe. If he is successful in taking scalps or stealing ponies he returns, and the widow can put aside her mourning and is at liberty to marry again.

"If a woman dies, the husband selects the one to make propitiation; the father, if a child dies.

"The idea which this superstition embodies is, that the affliction which the Kaws have been made to suffer has been an act indicating the displeasure of the Great Spirit, and intended to humble the tribe in respect to its standing with the Great Spirit, as between the Kaws and a hostile tribe. The sacrifice which the hostile tribe (against which the incursion is made) has been made to suffer in this way results in placing the Kaw family, and the band to which it belongs, on an equal footing before the Great Spirit with the hostile tribe which had not suffered the infliction imposed by the Great Spirit by the hand of death. . . At the same time that the chosen warrior is performing his acts of mourning, the members of the family of the deceased, every morning just at break of day, go through similar mourning exercises at their lodge." (Adams, p. 429.)

Chouteau arrived among the Kansa during the autumn of 1825; six years before, about midsummer of 1819, the Long expedition reached the same region and came in contact with some members of the tribe. A brief reference to the vague beliefs of the people is given in the narrative of the expedition: "When a man is killed in battle the thunder is supposed to take him up, they do not know where. They seem to have vague notions of the future state. They think that a brave warrior, or good hunter, will walk in a good path; but a bad man or coward will find a bad path. Thinking the deceased has far to travel they bury with his body, mockasins, some articles of food, &c. to support him on the journey. Many persons, they believe, have become reanimated, who had been, during their

apparent death, in strange villages; but as the inhabitants used them ill they returned. They say they have never seen the Master of Life, and therefore cannot pretend to personify him; but they have often heard him speak in the thunder; they wear often a shell which is in honour, or in representation of him, but they do not pretend that it resembles him, or has anything in common with his form, organization, or dimensions." And, as was the custom among other tribes, "After the death of the husband the widow scarifies herself, rubs her person with clay, and becomes negligent of her dress until the expiration of a year, when the eldest brother of the deceased takes her to wife without any ceremony, considers her children as his own, and takes her and them to his house; if the deceased left no brother, she marries whom she pleases." (James, I, pp. 124–126.)

OSAGE

Two and one-half centuries ago, when Père Marquette floated down the Mississippi, past the mouth of the Missouri, he learned of the Osage whose villages stood to the westward. They evidently at that time dominated a large part of the rough, broken region of the Ozarks, a region where game was abundant; where the many streams of clear water teemed with fish; where the wants and requirements of a native tribe were readily satisfied. Thus by the latter part of the seventeenth century the Osage were well established in what was to them a comparatively new home, as few generations had passed since their migration from the eastward, from their old villages in the valley of the Ohio.

There is reason to believe the Osage and Quapaw after their movement from the eastward maintained more closely their old manners and ways of life than did the remaining three tribes of the related group, who, pushing onward to the plains, were compelled to adopt new customs.

The Osage place their dead in graves, and in many instances the excavations were quite shallow, many having been discovered on high points in the Ozarks covered with large quantities of rock which had been gathered from the surroundng surface. As related in one early narrative, when referring to the Osage in particular: "At, or soon after burial, the relations of the deceased sometimes cover the grave with stones, and for years after, occasionally resort to it, and mourn over or recount the merits and virtues of its silent tenant." (Hunter, p. 309.)

Burials covered with irregular heaps of stones are to be found on the summits of cliffs in many parts of the Ozarks. The bodies, in many instances, had been placed in very shallow excavations, often appearing to have been not more than a few inches deep, and then

covered with stones gathered from the surrounding surface. What proportion of these numerous graves may be justly attributed to the Osage is an unsolved question, but undoubtedly the great majority were reared over the dead of this tribe. The Gasconade River is a typical Ozark stream, usually with a high cliff on one side and low ground on the other. A view of the Gasconade near Arlington, Phelps County, Mo., made many years ago, is reproduced in Plate 25, *b*. Many small heaps of stones, covering graves in which the human remains were scarcely discernible through decay, were encountered on the highest points of the cliffs shown in this picture. These were probably Osage burials of some generations ago; certainly not later than the beginning of the last century. Burials in various caves in the same region may likewise have been made by the Osage.

Osage graves as they appear in an old cemetery near Pawhuska, Okla., are shown in Plate 25, *a*. The burials seem to have been made near the brow of a cliff, extending along the edge. These were similar to the graves on the Ozark cliffs in the valley of the Gasconade.

The actual ceremony enacted at the time the body was placed in the grave was probably quite simple, but later and for many days they expressed their sorrow by rising early in the morning and "crying" near the grave. This strange and curious custom attracted the attention of many who came in contact with the people a century and more ago.

During the early part of April, 1811, a number of lodges of the Little Osage stood near the right bank of the Missouri, in the vicinity of Fort Osage, which stood a short distance northeast of the present town of Independence, Jackson County, Mo. Bradbury, then ascending the Missouri with a party of traders, reached the fort on April 8, 1811. He visited the native village and was interested in the unusual custom of the Osage already mentioned. To quote from his journal: "I enquired of Dr. Murry concerning a practice which I had heard prevailed amongst the Osage, of rising before day to lament their dead. He informed me that such was really the custom, and that the loss of a horse or a dog was as powerful a stimulus to their lamentations as that of a relative or friend; and he assured me, that if I should be awake before day the following morning, I might certainly hear them. Accordingly on the 9th I heard before day that the howling had commenced; and better to escape observation, I wrapped a blanket around me, tied a black handkerchief on my head, and fastened on my belt, in which I stuck my tomahawk, and then walked into the village. The doors of the lodges were closed, but in the greater part of them the women were crying and

howling in a tone that seemed to indicate excessive grief. On the outside of the village I heard the men who Dr. Murry had informed me always go out of the lodges to lament. I soon came within twenty paces of one, and could see him distinctly, as it was moonlight: he also saw me and ceased, upon which I withdrew. I was more successful with another, whom I approached nearer unobserved. He rested his back against the stump of a tree, and continued for about twenty seconds to cry out in a loud and high tone of voice, when he suddenly lowered to a low muttering, mixed with sobs: in a few seconds he again raised to the former pitch." (Bradbury, pp. 39–40.)

The preceding notes refer to the old villages which stood south of the Missouri. About the beginning of the last century a large part of the Great Osage, led by their chief, Big Track, moved southward to the valley of the Arkansas, where they were later visited by many travelers and missionaries.

During the summer of 1819, while ascending the Arkansas River, Nuttall encountered the first of the Osage villages about 60 miles from the mouth of the Verdigris. Another settlement was situated some 60 miles away. Both were probably quite large and interesting groups. Nuttall was attracted by their strange wailing, and on August 4, 1819, wrote: "This morning, about day-break, the Indians, who had encamped around us, broke out into their usual lamentations and complaints to the Great Spirit. Their mourning was truly pathetic, and uttered in a peculiar tone. Amongst those who first broke forth into lamentation, and aroused the rest to their melancholy orisons, was the pious Ta-lai. The commencing tone was exceeding loud, and gradually fell off into a low, long continued, and almost monotonous base. To this tone of lamentation was modulated, the subject of their distress or petition. Those who had experienced any great distress or misfortune, previously blackened their faces with coal, or besmeared them with ashes." (Nuttall, p. 190.) And referring to certain beliefs of the same people: "Although they generally believe in the immortality of the soul, they have no steady and distinct conception of a state of reward and punishment. The future state, believed to be but little different from that which they now enjoy, is alike attainable by every hunter, and every warrior. It is on a conviction of this belief, that the implements of war, and the decorations and utensils employed by the living, are entombed with the dead." (Op. cit., p. 195.)

A very good account of the manners and ways of life of the Osage, probably written by an officer of the Army, but unfortunately not signed, appeared in the American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine, Volume VI, No. 9, May, 1835. The communication was in the

form of a letter, dated Fort Gibson, March, 1835. A part of the article is of special interest at this time. It reads: "Over the dead body of a relative, they frequently vow to mourn a certain number of months or years; which they religiously perform. They give away, while in mourning, all their ornaments and good clothing, retaining only rags; put mud upon the heads, cut off locks of the hair, if women, and allow it to grow, if men; pay no attention to personal appearance, and disfigure themselves by inflicting wounds; and every morning, an hour or two before day-dawn, raise a song of lamentation for the departed. The mud is renewed daily for three months; and during this period they do not bathe, nor is any food eaten by the head of a lodge—parent for a child, a child for a parent; a husband for a wife, a wife for a husband—while the sun is above the horizon; but the children are allowed to eat at noon: at the setting of the sun the mourners hail his departure, which allows them to refresh nature. At the expiration of three months they apply the mud, and mourn (or cry, as it is termed,) every four alternate days, until the expiration of their vows, or their grief subsides. They sometimes mourn for three years . . . The effect produced in the darkness of the night, when awakened from a deep slumber, by the voices of perhaps a hundred persons of both sexes who are addressing the deity, and the spirits of the dead, is, in the highest degree, impressive."

An interesting account of the beliefs of the Osage was printed several years before Nuttall's journey. The notes are brief but concise, and among them is a reference to their belief in a future state after death. "They believe, if they are faithful to their nation and kind to their relatives, good warriors and good hunters, that when they die, they shall go to a most delightful country, which abounds in game; where there will be perpetual day; a bright sun and clear sky; when they will meet their old friends; and where they will enjoy every pleasure they were fond of here, without interruption. But that those who are bad here, especially those who are ungrateful to the aged, when they die, will go to a place of punishment, where they will suffer the severest privations, and be denied every thing that was pleasant or desirable in this life. But the traders say, it is with great difficulty they can be prevailed upon to converse at all on these subjects." (Cutler, p. 119.) The Osage were evidently at that time little influenced by their contact with Europeans, and the work just quoted continues to say: "The French made repeated attempts to introduce Missionaries among them, but they could not succeed."

Although the French did not meet with much success in their endeavors to send missionaries among the Osage, others were more

fortunate in later years, and missions were established. Interesting references to the manners and ways of life of the people are contained in letters written from the missions. Naturally, the writers of the letters had intercourse with the Indians in a different manner than did the traders and casual visitors to their villages, and were able to observe more closely and more clearly certain customs of the people. Father Bax, who wrote to Father De Smet from the Osage "Village of St. Francis Hieronymo, June 10th, 1850," told of the death of an Indian convert. He wrote in part: "The consoling death of this Indian was followed by a most distressing scene. I had never witnessed demonstrations of sorrow so profound. The men, throwing off that stoical indifference which appears to be so natural to them, heaved deep sighs and shed torrents of tears; the women, with dishevelled hair, shrieked and gave all signs of a despair over which reason cannot predominate. I buried the Indian, on the following day, in accordance with the ritual of the Church." Thus men, as well as women, were wont to express their grief at the death of one of their number. This would agree with Bradbury's account of the scene which he witnessed at the Osage camp on the bank of the Missouri during the spring of 1811.

Father Bax had more to say about the actions of the Osage in the presence of one who they believed was about to expire. The father was called from the mission to the village. This was during the autumn of 1848. He told how, "Arriving at the village at midnight, I found the lodge filled with women and children, crying and singing the Indian death-song. I besought them to conclude these lugubrious accents, and approached the sick woman, extended on a buffalo-hide, and scarcely covered with some tattered blankets. She was unconscious." He remained through the night. Later, "the women and the children recommenced their frightful clamor; the dogs of the wigwam passed back and forward over me with such steady regularity, that it would have been quite impossible to me to count the number of visits. About daylight, the patient began to give some signs of life; but she could not yet speak. As soon as she had recovered her senses entirely, I made her a short exhortation. She appeared attentive, and gave signs of real joy. I baptized her, and departed." (De Smet, pp. 364–365.) Such were the labors of a missionary among a scattered tribe.

A more general account, but no less interesting, begins by stating that it was the custom of the Osage to bury their dead as did other tribes. As it was also the custom of many tribes to mourn their dead, "yet the Osages are by far the most accomplished mourners of them all." And the narrative continues: "Being once encamped near a party of them, I was awakened at the dawn of day by the most doleful, piteous, heart-rending howls and lamentations. The

apparently distressed mourner would cry with a protracted expiration till completely out of breath. For some instants he seemed to be in the very last agonies: then he would recover breath with a smothered gurgling inspiration: and thus he continued for several minutes, giving vent to every variety of hideous and terrific sounds. Looking around, I perceived the weeper standing with his face towards the faint gleam which flitted from the still obscured sun. This was perhaps his idol; else he was standing thus because his deceased relation lay in that direction. A full 'choir' of these mourners (which is always joined by the howls and yelps of their myriads of dogs), imparts the most frightful horror to a wilderness camp." (Gregg, II, p. 303.)

QUAPAW

The villages of the Quapaw, the southernmost tribe of the Siouan group now being discussed, stood just west of the Mississippi near the mouth of the Arkansas. The villages, four or five in number, occupied a very restricted area, were close to one another, and probably did not differ in appearance. The habitations were covered with bark. Père Marquette, floating down the Mississippi, arrived at the mouth of the Arkansas, rested at the villages of the Quapaw, and turned northward July 17, 1673. Just 14 years later, on July 24, 1687, Joutel and other members of La Salle's ill-fated party reached the villages in their journey from the far-distant coasts of the Gulf of Mexico to the French post in the valley of the Illinois.

Joutel's description of the Quapaw villages is most valuable. Later he described the burial customs of the Illinois tribes with whom he soon came in contact. Evidently both Siouan and Algonquian disposed of their dead in the same manner. Referring to the Illinois in particular, Joutel wrote: "They pay a Respect to their Dead, as appears by their special Care of burying them, and even of putting into lofty Coffins the Bodies of such as are considered among them, as their Chiefs and others, which is also practiced among the *Accancea's* but they differ in this particular, that the *Accancea's* weep and make their Complaints for some Days, where as the *Chahouanous* and other people of the *Islinois* Nation do just the Contrary." (Joutel, p. 174.) From this all too brief account it is quite evident the Quapaw of two and a half centuries ago, living in their native state, followed the customs of the kindred Osage and expressed their grief by howling and moaning, long after the death of the individual. And it is possible that, like the Osage, they chose the early hours of the day for the ceremony. It is also evident that they had two or more ways of disposing of their dead. The re-

mains of the principal men of a village were placed in "lofty Coffins," a statement which at once suggests a form of tree or scaffold burial. All others were probably placed in ordinary graves. Similar methods of disposing of their dead were followed by the Algonquian tribes of Virginia at the time of the settlement of Jamestown, but among them the bodies of the chief men were wrapped and placed on platforms erected within a mat-covered structure termed by the early writers a "temple." A structure of this nature may have stood in every village, as did the "bone houses" among the Choctaw.

Chiwere Group

Three tribes are recognized as constituting this Siouan group—the Iowa, Oto, and Missouri. Tribal traditions refer to their early home east of the Mississippi, probably in the vicinity of Lake Michigan, where they were closely associated with the related Winnebago, but when the three tribes moved westward the latter remained and continued to occupy their old sites among the lakes and streams of the northern part of the present State of Wisconsin.

OTO

On July 21, 1804, the Lewis and Clark party reached the mouth of the Platte, at which time the Oto were living on the south side of the stream some 10 leagues above its confluence with the Missouri. Six days later, while ascending the Missouri, they arrived at a point a short distance above Papillion Creek, not far from the present city of Omaha, and there, so they wrote, "we saw and examined a curious collection of graves or mounds, on the south side of the river. Not far from a low piece of land and a pond, is a tract of about two hundred acres in circumference, which is covered with mounds of different heights, shapes, and sizes; some of sand, and some of both earth and sand; the largest being nearest the river. These mounds indicate the position of the ancient village of the Ottoes, before they retired to the protection of the Pawnees." (Lewis and Clark, I, p. 35.) Although the statement is not very clear, it is quite evident the party discovered a group of large mounds, formed by the falling of earth lodges, and likewise encountered the cemetery which belonged to the once flourishing village.

The graves were indicated by small mounds of earth, probably protected in various ways.

Sometime during the winter of 1851–52 a German traveler named Möllhausen became separated from his companions and lost on the snow and ice covered prairies of Nebraska. He reached a small encampment of Oto and remained with them until their return to

the permanent village situated near the angle "formed by the Nebrasca and Missouri." At that time, so he wrote, "We passed the burial place of the Ottoes just before we descended into the valley, and shortly afterwards came to the village. The first consisted of a number of hillocks inclosed by rough palings, and decorated with sticks with little bits of coloured stuff and feathers fluttering from them." (Möllhausen, I, pp. 210–211.)

A brief but clear and concise account of an Oto burial, one which explains the origin of the small mounds of earth, was prepared by a missionary to the tribe, September 3, 1836: "Iskutupe, son of Jokdpe, died last night—he has been ill ten or fifteen days. Was under the care of Otoe physicians. Several times sent him coffee and bread. Twice by request gave him purgative medicine. His illness was ague and fever—at last fever only. He died immediately after coming out of their steaming house. This morning visited the house of mourning. It was painful to witness the wailings of these heathens. They weep as they have no hope. They say their friend is lost. Some old men who had killed their enemies and stolen horses, gave to the spirit of the deceased the virtue of these deeds of bravery that it might go happy to the world of spirits. For this gift the old men received presents of cloth. Wailing continued among the relatives till 11 o'clock a. m., at which time two persons took the body of the deceased, which was wrapped in a skin and blanket, and bore it slung on a pole, to the grave. After the body followed the relatives bearing articles and provisions for the deceased to be interred with the body. The body was placed in a sitting posture one or two feet under ground, with a covering of poles, mats, and earth. The relatives buried the body; none others except myself and wife were present." (Merrill, p. 176.)

The missionary whose description of a burial among the Oto has just been given left an equally interesting account of the treatment of a wounded man. This was prepared May 15, 1834, and reads: "There is a class of men here called Washwahe, or medicine men. They are men advanced in life, and are the physicians of the tribe. Today they had much to do for the wounded Ioway man before spoken of. I was permitted to witness only the closing exercises. The medicine men were sitting on one side of the lodge, and the sick man, naked, sitting upon the other side. When I entered the lodge the old men were singing, aided with beating of the drum, sound of rattles and small wind instruments. After the lapse of a few minutes, they commenced dancing around the poor man, who was no doubt expecting to derive great benefit from these exercises. Near the sick man were placed several dishes with water. Whether or not this water was supposed to possess some peculiar virtue I do not know. But as they danced around, they took this water in their

mouths, and occasionally would spurt it upon the head of the sick man. These exercises continued half an hour after I entered the lodge. The spectators then dispersed and I followed them." He also witnessed the manner of treating a small child: "I saw one of these medicine men perform the operation of cupping on an infant at the breast. The incisions were made with a large penknife and the blood drawn with the mouth. This operation was performed four several times in succession on different parts of the body amidst the shrieks of the infant babe." (Op. cit., p. 167.)

MISSOURI

Unfortunately, the Missouri had lost their strength as a tribe before the region which they had occupied was traversed by the several expeditions sent out by the Government soon after the transfer of Louisiana to discover the tribes of the newly acquired Territories. On June 13, 1804, the Lewis and Clark party, ascending the Missouri River, reached the site of the great Missouri village between two creeks on the north bank of the Missouri, about 5 miles below the mouth of Grand River. Evidently it must have been a very large and important village only a few years before, as at that time, June, 1804, it consisted of "a feeble remnant of about thirty families." Not many years elapsed before the remnant of this once important tribe sought refuge among the kindred Oto, then established west of the Missouri, and eastward from the villages of the Pawnee. The two tribes—Missouri and Oto—continued to dwell together, and later occupied a reservation in southern Gage County, Nebr.

Dr. W. C. Boteler, stationed at the Oto Indian Agency before the year 1880, prepared an account of the burial customs of the two tribes with whom he came in such close contact. The customs, so he wrote, revealed little change through the contact of the Indians with the whites. "The Otoe and Missouri tribes of Indians are now located in southern Gage County, Nebraska, on a reservation of 43,000 acres, unsurpassed in beauty of location, natural resources, and adaptability for prosperous agriculture."

The narrative begins with telling how, even before life is extinct and while the person is still capable of understanding what is being done, he or she is dressed in the best clothes and most elaborate ornaments obtainable. This is usually done by women of the tribes, following the wishes of the person. "It is customary for the dying Indian to dictate, ere his departure, the propriety or impropriety of the accustomed sacrifice. In some cases there is a double and in others no sacrifice at all. The Indian women then prepare to cut away their hair; it is accomplished with scissors, cutting close to the scalp at the side and behind.

"The preparation of the dead for burial is conducted with great solemnity and care. Bead-work the most ornate, expensive blankets and ribbons comprise the funeral shroud. The dead, being thus enrobed, is placed in a recumbent posture at the most conspicuous part of the lodge and viewed in rotation by the mourning relatives previously summoned by a courier, all preserving uniformity in the piercing screams which would seem to have been learned by rote.

"An apparent service is then conducted. The aged men of the tribe, arranged in a circle, chant a peculiar funeral dirge around one of their number, keeping time upon a drum or some rude cooking utensil." Some would dance within the circle, to drive away the evil spirit. This would be followed by feasting, at which time "All who assemble are supplied with cooked venison, hog, buffalo, or beef, regular waiters distributing alike hot cakes soaked in grease and coffee or water, as the case may be."

Near the conclusion of the feast the bereaved family would often receive gifts from their friends, "such as calico in bolt, flannel cloth, robes, and not unfrequently ponies or horses." The body was then conveyed to the grave, on the back of a horse but in more recent times in a wagon, and "before the interment of the dead the chattels of the deceased are unloaded from the wagons or unpacked from the backs of ponies and carefully arranged in the vault-like tomb. The bottom, which is wider than the top (graves here being dug like an inverted funnel), is spread with straw or grass matting, woven generally by the Indian women of the tribe or some near neighbor. The sides are then carefully hung with handsome shawls or blankets, and trunks, with domestic articles, pottery, &c., of less importance, are piled around in abundance. The sacrifices are next inaugurated. A pony, first designated by the dying Indian, is led aside and strangled by men hanging to either end of a rope. Sometimes, but not always, a dog is likewise strangled, the heads of both animals being subsequently laid upon the Indian's grave. The body, which is now often placed in a plain coffin, is lowered into the grave, and if a coffin is used the friends take their parting look at the deceased before closing it at the grave. After lowering, a saddle and bridle, blankets, dishes, &c., are placed upon it, the mourning ceases, and the Indians prepare to close the grave. It should be remembered, among the Otoe and Missouri Indians dirt is not filled in upon the body, but simply rounded up from the surface upon stout logs that are accurately fitted over the opening of the grave. After the burying is completed, a distribution of the property of the deceased takes place, the near relatives receiving everything from the merest trifle to the tent and horses, leaving the immediate family, wife and children or father out-door pensioners." A small fire was then kept burning at the grave for four days and four nights and, according to their belief, "at the expiration of this time the Indian arose, and

mounting his spirit pony, galloped off to the happy hunting-ground beyond." (Yarrow, pp. 96–97.)

The preceding is one of the most interesting and complete accounts known of the ceremonies attending death and burial of a member of a tribe of this Siouan group. It reveals few, if any, changes from the old customs of the tribes as a result of contact with the whites. The objects which were deposited in the graves with the bodies were necessarily in some instances different from those used in earlier days. Guns were probably substituted for the more primitive bows and arrows, and plain coffins took the place of more elaborate wrapping in robes and blankets. But the ceremonies remained unchanged.

Mandan

The French-Canadian trapper Le Raye arrived at the mouth of the Osage, on the banks of the Missouri, October 7, 1801. Later the same month he was taken captive by a band of Indians, by whom he was conducted northward up the Missouri. Early in June, 1802, he reached the Mandan villages. The lower town, the one standing farther down the Missouri, was first reached, and in his narrative he wrote: "Here a sight, new to me, and exceedingly disagreeable, arrested my attention as soon as I came in view of the village. This was their manner of depositing the bodies of the dead. Immediately after my arrival I had an opportunity of witnessing the funeral ceremonies practised by these people, which was in the following manner: A dead body was brought out of a hut, and laid on the ground before it, dressed in its best apparel, and wrapped in a buffalo robe. The relations and principal part of the people of the village, assembled around it. A fire was then made, and the sacred stem, or pipe, was brought and lighted. The deceased having been a warrior, an eulogy of considerable length was pronounced by his brother, in which he impressed on their minds, the great importance which the deceased man had been to their nation; rehearsed his war exploits, and concluded by urging all to follow his example, and to become of equal usefulness to their tribe. Then they would be sure of following and becoming companions of him, and all the other great warriors, which had died before, in the world of spirits. After this address was closed, provisions were brought out, consisting of boiled dog's flesh, of which the company just tasted, and then a bowl full of it was presented to the dead man. He was then taken up by four men and carried outside of the village, just into the edge of the woods, and placed on a stage which had been previously erected, about ten feet high. The bowl of food was brought and set by his head, and his arms and accoutrements laid by his side. In this manner their dead are deposited, and are never buried. The wife and

relations of the deceased made the most violent and dreadful howlings, tearing their hair, and appearing to be in the deepest anguish, under the loss they had sustained." (Le Raye, pp. 181–182.)

Little more than two years were to pass after the visit by Le Raye before the arrival of the Lewis and Clark expedition among the Mandan. On October 26, 1804, the latter party reached the first of the two occupied villages, Matootonha, a short distance below the mouth of Knife River, on the bank of the Missouri. Kagohami, or Little Raven, had been declared second chief of the village, and he often visited at the winter encampment of the expedition situated near the native village. And in the journal, dated February 20, 1805, is a brief reference which tells that: "Kagohami came down to see us early: his village is afflicted by the death of one of their eldest men, who from his account to us must have seen one hundred and twenty winters. Just as he was dying, he requested his grandchildren to dress him in his best robe when he was dead, and then carry him on a hill and seat him on a stone, with his face down the river towards their old villages, that he might go straight to his brother who had passed before him to the ancient village under ground." (Lewis and Clark, I, p. 163.) The sites of the old Mandan villages had already been passed by the party while ascending the Missouri. They were nine in number, two having stood on the east or left bank of the Missouri and seven on the opposite side. Evidently all were occupied as late as the year 1760, this being the information recorded in 1804. A brief reference to the curious beliefs of the Mandan was written in the journal on December 4, 1804. "Their belief in a future state is connected with this tradition of their origin: the whole nation resided in one large village under ground near a subterraneous lake: a grape-vine extended its roots down to their habitation and gave them a view of the light: some of the most adventurous climbed up the vine and were delighted with the sight of the earth, which they found covered with buffaloe and rich with every kind of fruits: returning with the grapes they had gathered, their countrymen were so pleased with the taste of them that the whole nation resolved to leave their dull residence for the charms of the upper region; men, women, and children ascended by means of the vine; but when half the nation had reached the surface of the earth, a corpulent woman who was clambering up the vine broke it with her weight, and closed upon herself and the rest of the nation the light of the sun. Those who were left on earth made a village below where we saw the nine villages; and when the Mandans die they expect to return to the original seats of their forefathers; the good reaching the ancient village by means of the lake, which the burden of the sins of the wicked will not enable them to cross." (Op. cit., p. 139.)

The group of ancient villages had probably been occupied through many generations, and sufficient time had elapsed since their founding to let them be considered the first home of the nation on earth. Here they were undoubtedly living in 1738, when visited by La Verendrye and his French and Indian companions.

The many scaffolds standing in the vicinity of the Mandan villages were mentioned by Brackenridge, who spent July 4, 1811, among these interesting people. He wrote: "On a visit to the village, I saw a great number of small scaffolds scattered over the prairie, on which human bodies were exposed. The scaffolds are supported with four forks, and sufficiently large to receive one or two bodies. They are covered with blankets, cloth of different colors, and a variety of offerings. In this they are different from the Arikaras, who bury their dead as we do." (Brackenridge, p. 261.)

Catlin, who visited the Mandan during the year 1832, just five years before the smallpox epidemic which resulted in the death of a large part of the tribe, prepared an interesting description of the manners and ways of life of the people while they were yet in a powerful and prosperous condition. Concerning the disposal of their dead he wrote: "These people never bury the dead, but place the bodies on slight scaffolds just above the reach of human hands, and out of the way of wolves and dogs; and they are there left to moulder and decay. This cemetery, or place of deposit for the dead, is just back of the village, on a level prairie; and with all its appearances, history, forms, ceremonies, &c., is one of the strangest and most interesting objects to be described in the vicinity of this peculiar race.

"Whenever a person dies in the Mandan village, and the customary honours and condolence are paid to his remains, and the body dressed in its best attire, painted, oiled, feasted, and supplied with bow and quiver, shield, pipe and tobacco, knife, flint and steel, and provisions enough to last him a few days on the journey which he is to perform; a fresh buffalo's skin, just taken from the animal's back, is wrapped around the body, and tightly bound and wound with thongs of raw hide from head to foot. Then other robes are soaked in water, till they are quite soft and elastic, which are also bandaged around the body in the same manner, and tied fast with thongs, which are wound with great care and exactness, so as to exclude the action of the air from all parts of the body.

"There is then a separate scaffold erected for it, constructed of four upright posts, a little higher than human hands can reach; and on the tops of these are small poles passing around from one post to the others; across which a number of willow-rods just strong enough to support the body, which is laid upon them on its back, with its feet carefully presented towards the rising sun. (Pl. 26, *a*.)

"There are a great number of these bodies resting exactly in a similar way; excepting in some instances where a chief, or medicine-man, may be seen with a few yards of scarlet or blue cloth spread over his remains, as a mark of public respect and esteem. Some hundreds of these bodies may be seen reposing in this manner in this curious place, which the Indians call, 'the village of the dead.'" (Catlin, I, p. 89.) Later "fathers, mothers, wives, and children, may be seen lying under these scaffolds, prostrated upon the ground, with their faces in the dirt, howling forth incessantly the most piteous and heart-broken cries and lamentations for the misfortunes of their kindred; tearing their hair, cutting their flesh with their knives, and doing other penance to appease the spirits of the dead whose misfortunes they attribute to some sin or omission of their own."

In time the scaffolds would fall and the wrappings which held the remains would decay and open, thus allowing the bones to become separated. The bones, with the single exception of the skulls, would then be buried. The skulls would be placed in circles, 20 or more feet in diameter, and in the center would be raised a mound of earth about 3 feet in height on which would be placed two buffalo skulls, one of a male and the second of a female. Rising from the center of the mound was "a 'medicine pole,' about twenty feet high, supporting many curious articles of mystery and superstition, which they suppose have the power of guarding and protecting this sacred arrangement." Each skull was placed upon a bunch of wild sage, "which had been pulled and placed under it." And "as soon as it is discovered that the sage on which the skull rests is beginning to decay, the woman cuts a fresh bunch, and places the skull carefully upon it, removing that which was under it." Relatives appear to have remembered and recognized the various skulls and, as Catlin continued: "There is scarcely an hour in a pleasant day, but more or less of these women may be seen sitting or laying by the skull of their child or husband, talking to it in the most pleasant and endearing language that they can use (as they were wont to do in former days) and seemingly getting an answer back . . . There is something exceedingly interesting and impressive in these scenes, which are so strikingly dissimilar, and yet within a few rods of each other." (Catlin, I, pp. 90–91.) And, referring to the mourning customs of the same people, "the women are obliged to crop their hair all off; and the usual term of that condolence is until the hair has grown again to its former length," but among the men "only a lock or two can be spared." (Op. cit., p. 95.) Such were the customs of this truly remarkable tribe.

Catlin observed another curious habit among the Mandan, and described what he termed "a mourning cradle." He wrote: "If the

infant dies during the time that is allotted to it to be carried in this cradle, it is buried, and the disconsolate mother fills the cradle with black quills and feathers, in the parts which the child's body had occupied, and in this way carries it around with her wherever she goes for a year or more, with as much care as if her infant were alive and in it." The cradle would be stood against the side of the lodge and the mother would talk and address it in a familiar manner, as she would have done had the baby been in it. (Op. cit., II, p. 133.)

The year following Catlin's visit to the Mandan, Maximilian and his companion, the artist Karl Bodmer, arrived among the same people. The descriptions of the Mandan villages prepared by Maximilian are of great interest, and the sketches made by Bodmer are the most accurate in detail of the many pictures made in the upper Mississippi Valley.

Maximilian left Fort Clark, near the lower of the two Mandan villages, on the steamboat *Assiniboin*, bound for the upper waters of the Missouri, June 19, 1833. By 10 o'clock that morning they were approaching "Ruhptare, the second Mandan village, on the south bank," where, so Maximilian wrote: "all the inhabitants, in their buffalo dresses, were collected on the bank, and some had taken their station on the tops of their huts to have a better view: the whole prairie was covered with people, Indians on horseback, and horses grazing. In the low willow thickets on the bank, the brown, naked children were running about; all the men had fans of eagles' feathers in their hands. The village was surrounded with a fence of palisades; and, with its spherical clay huts, looked like a New Zealand Hippah. Here, too, there were high poles near the village, on which skins and other things were hung, as offerings to the lord of life, or the sun, and numerous stages for the dead were scattered about the prairie." (Maximilian, p. 177.) Maximilian returned to the Mandan towns later in the year and subsequently wrote an interesting account of the manners and ways of life of the people. The customs of the Mandan and of their neighbors were evidently quite similar. Thus Maximilian wrote concerning the ceremonies attending death and burial among the two tribes: "When a Mandan or Manitari dies, they do not let the corpse remain long in the village; but convey it to the distance of 200 paces, and lay it on a narrow stage, about six feet long, resting on four stakes about 10 feet high, the body being first laced up in buffalo robes and a blanket. The face, painted red, is turned towards the east. A number of such stages are seen about their villages, and, although they themselves say that this custom is injurious to the health of the villages, they do not renounce it. On many of these stages there are small boxes, containing the bodies of children wrapped in cloth or skins." And, continuing, Maximilian

wrote: "They believe that every person has several spirits dwelling in him; one of these spirits is black, another brown, and another light-coloured, the latter of which alone returns to the lord of life. They think that after death they go to the south, to several villages which are often visited by the gods; that the brave and most eminent go to the village of the good, but the wicked into a different one; that they there live in the same manner as they do here, carry on the same occupations, eat the same food, have wives, and enjoy the pleasures of the chase and war. Those who are kind-hearted are supposed to make many presents and do good, find everything in abundance, and their existence there is dependant on their course of life while in the world. Some of the inhabitants of the Mandan villages are said not to believe all these particulars, and suppose that after death they will live in the sun or in a certain star."

The peculiar mourning customs of the Mandan were next considered by the same careful observer, who related how "They mourn for the dead a whole year; cut off their hair, cover their body and head with white or grey clay, and often, with a knife or sharp flint, make incisions in their arms and legs in parallel lines, in their whole length, so that they are covered with blood. For some days after death the relations make a loud lament and bewailing. Often a relative, or some other friend, covers the dead, as they express it: he brings one or two woollen cloths, of red, blue, white, or green colour, and, as soon as the body is laid on the stage, mounts upon the scaffolding, and conceals the body beneath the covering. A friend who will do this is, in token of respect, presented, by the family of the deceased, with a horse. If it is known beforehand that a person intends doing this honour to the dead, a horse is at once tied near the stage, and the friend, having performed this last office, unties the animal and leads it away. If a Mandan or Manitari falls in battle, and the news of his death reaches the family, who are unable to recover the body, a buffalo skin is rolled up and carried to the village. All those who desire to lament the deceased assemble, and many articles of value are distributed among them. The mourners cut off their hair, wound themselves with knives, and make loud lamentations. Joints of the fingers are not cut off here, as among the Blackfeet, as a token of mourning, but as signs of penance and offering to the lord of life and the first man." (Maxmilian, pp. 392–393.) The strange method of preserving the skulls and arranging them close together on the prairie, as was recorded by Catlin, was witnessed by Maximilian and Bodmer. The former described the custom in his narrative while the latter made one or more interesting drawings of the unusual sight thus presented. Evidently Catlin had understood more clearly the reason for these groups than did Maximilian, who did not offer any explanation but

merely described briefly what he saw. "The Mandans have many other medicine establishments in the vicinity of their villages, all of which are dedicated to the superior powers. Mr. Bodmer has made very accurate drawings of those near Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, one of which consists of four poles placed in the form of a square; the two foremost have a heap of earth and green turf thrown up round them, and four buffalo skulls laid in a line between them, while twenty-six human skulls are placed in a row from one of the stakes at the back to the other; some of these skulls are painted with a red stripe. Behind the whole a couple of knives are stuck into the ground, and a bundle of twigs is fastened at the top of the poles with a kind of comb, or the teeth of a rake, painted red. (Pl. 27.) The Indians repair to such places when they desire to make offerings or put up petitions; they howl, lament, and make loud entreaties, often for many days together, to the lord of life, which the French Canadians call weeping, though no tears are shed." (Op. cit., p. 381.) Another drawing was made at the same time. This was supposed to represent "a couple of human figures, very clumsily made of skins," which were attached to poles, "representing, as we were told, the sun and moon, probably the lord of life and the old woman who never dies."

The two interesting accounts of the manners and customs of the Mandan which have now been quoted, one prepared by Catlin during the year 1832, the second as recorded by Maximilian one year later, differ somewhat in detail, as should be expected, but are similar in the main facts. Both describe the ways of this most interesting of Upper Missouri Valley tribes a short time before they were to be reduced to a mere remnant of their former strength and number by the dreaded smallpox which swept through the region in 1837. Soon the small number of Mandan who had survived the epidemic abandoned their old village near Fort Clark and sought a new home farther up the Missouri. They became established with the Hidatsa in the vicinity of Fort Berthold, and later the Arikara became the third tribe of the interesting group. Thus the remnant of the once powerful Mandan were living at Fort Berthold when the Swiss artist Kurz arrived at that post during the summer of 1851. Kurz's many remarkable experiences were recorded in his diary. The entry for Sunday, July 13, 1851, is of particular interest at this time and will be quoted at length: "In the afternoon, while I was industriously sketching, a Mandan came hurriedly into my room and begged for my double-barrelled shot gun, because one of his comrades had been shot by an enemy. As, in event of an attack, I might need the weapon myself, I refused to let him have it. I went out immediately to the village to find out what was going on and found

the place like a swarming bee hive. Warriors and young men in arms were hurrying already across the plain, others were mounting their horses, a crowd of women were returning in haste from the fields where they had been grubbing turnips, other women were going out, curious on-lookers were standing in groups, eagerly gesticulating, anxiously chattering. An Indian, called *Le Boeuf Court Queue*, had been shot, they said, by one of the Sioux. He had been at the Fort about breakfast time. I wished to trade with him for an old style tomahawk—elliptical stone attached to a very tough dried tail of the buffalo bull. I sat on the roof of our house and scanned the village and plain with my telescope. Though it was a gable roof, it was covered with earth instead of shingles; so I could easily walk around up there. The scene before me was most interesting: an increasing number of women and children were returning across the plain, some on horseback, others on foot; some with their beasts, others driving loaded travays drawn by dogs. Toward sun set I saw approaching the escort with the dead. Nearer and nearer they came across the plain in the golden, shimmering light that soon deepened to violet, then to gray, throwing the dark forms in relief; the nearer they came the more dull and dead appeared the heavens until, in the dusk of the twilight, they arrived at the village. First came the mourning widow, leading the horse across whose back lay her dead husband wrapped in his blanket. Mourning relatives followed, encircled by restive braves whose blood was hot. Now we got some information concerning the coup. *Le Boeuf Court Queue* had gone with his family out on the prairie three miles north of the village and had lain down on the ground beside his grazing horse, while his wife and child were grubbing turnips. Suddenly, the squaw was aware of something moving in the tall grass in front of her and, knowing that they were on the extreme boundary of their fields, where danger might be lurking, she called her husband's attention to it. The Mandan swung himself at once upon his horse, bow and arrow in hand, to investigate the suspicious movement of some low bushes, but hardly was he in range of the enemy's arrow when he dropped dead from his steed. The women screamed for help. The enemy fled without the scalp, in fact without having touched the Mandan. The deed, therefore, is not counted a coup. To shoot a person from a distance and kill him is not regarded among Indians as an heroic act. One must scalp the person attacked. One of the five men who admit having witnessed the deed, reports that the enemy took away the Mandan's swift footed horse.

"Having arrived at the burial ground, the dead warrior was taken from his horse and laid on his blanket, his head and chest raised. Relatives sat around him wailing and howling, jerking out their hair, pounding their heads with their fists, tearing their flesh with

a. MANDAN VILLAGE AND SCAFFOLD BURIALS

b. BUTTE DE MORT, UPPER MISSOURI, A GREAT BURIAL PLACE OF THE SIOUX

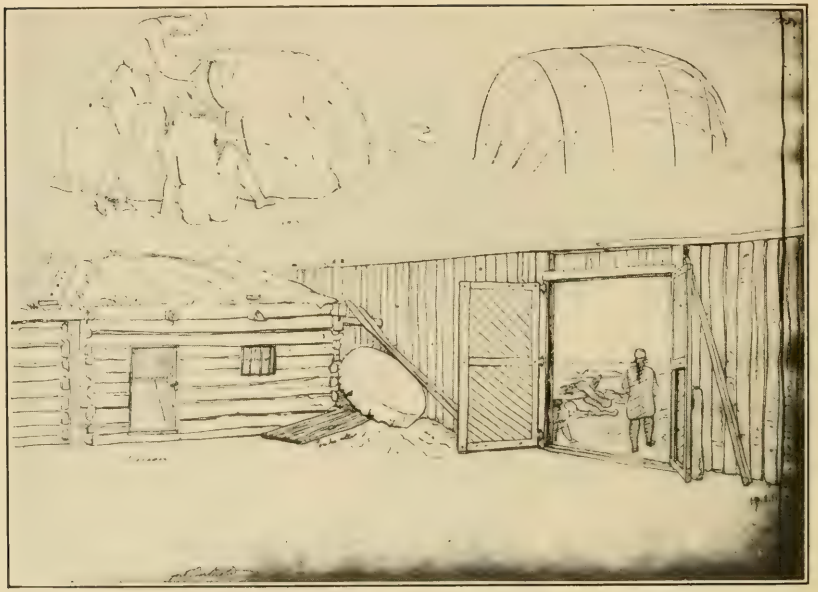
After paintings by George Catlin

MANDAN SHRINE

After painting by Karl Bodmer, 1833

MANDAN OFFERINGS, NEAR FORT BERTHOLD

Drawing by Friedrich Kurz, 1851



a. INTERIOR, FORT BERTHOLD

b. DRAWINGS MADE IN THE VICINITY OF FORT BERTHOLD

Drawings by Friedrich Kurz, 1851

knives and arrow points until their blood flowed as sacrifice. Friends brought blankets, garments, bright colors as funeral offerings. Meanwhile a scaffold was constructed of four stakes held together with cross-beams. Upon this structure the fallen Mandan, attired after the manner of Indian warriors and wrapped in his robe, was laid beneath the covering of a new red blanket. His medicine pouch was fastened to one of the posts. The crowd dispersed, only his widow and his mother remained to wail.

"Indians on the prairie do not put their dead under ground; in the first place they have no implements suitable for digging graves and, second, the bodies would have to be buried very deep to be secure from wolves. The sight of those scaffolds, erected for the dead, is often horrible, even loathsome, when, after a time, the wind having loosened the wrappings, crows and ravens continually ravage the body. In the end the posts themselves give way and the remains of the dead, once so respected, so much beloved, so deplored, lie scattered on the ground, the prey of magpies and mice."

Kurz made many interesting drawings during his stay at Fort Berthold, one of which is now reproduced in Plate 28. This shows himself standing, with sketch book in hand, and Fort Berthold on the bank of the Missouri beyond. It was made August 26, 1851, and on that day he wrote in his journal: "Have made a sketch of the great Place of Sacrifice dedicated to the Sun and Moon. A bepainted buffalo skull set on the summit of a small mound, is encircled by other skulls. In front of every skull a bit of white down is placed on a small stave. Beside the circle of skulls stand two posts to which are hung bear skins. Fastened to the posts above are bundles of fagots; above one of the bundles, lies a fur cap to indicate the man, while the other is to represent the woman,—that is, the Sun and the Moon." The skulls, both buffalo and human, are shown on the ground. Kurz was evidently standing with his horse within the circle thus formed.

Hidatsa Group

The Hidatsa proper, whose three villages stood on the banks of Knife River near the Missouri, when they were encountered by the explorers who ascended the latter stream during the first years of the last century, and the related Crows who lived farther to the westward, constituted what has now been termed the Hidatsa group. The Hidatsa were referred to by various names in the early writings. By some they were known as the Minnetarees and by others as the Gros Ventres of the Missouri, thus to distinguish them from the Gros Ventres of the Prairie or Atsina.

It is quite evident the Crows and Hidatsa proper were, until a few generations ago, practically one people, who may have occupied

a great village, or several villages in close proximity, as did the Mandans, but for some reason now unknown they separated, and those to whom the name Crows is now applied advanced up the Valley of the Missouri to the mountains. Here their ways of life changed; they no longer occupied permanent villages of earth lodges but lived in skin tipis, which were famed for their size and the skill with which the skins were prepared and decorated.

There appears to have been little or no change in the burial customs of the people. All continued to place their dead on scaffolds.

HIDATSA

The Hidatsa, neighbors of the Mandan, at the beginning of the nineteenth century occupied villages on the banks of Knife River, at and above its junction with the Missouri. The manners and customs of the two tribes were quite similar. Le Raye, who arrived among the Mandan early in the month of June, 1802, and who left such an interesting account of the burial customs of that people, wrote on the 13th of the same month concerning the Hidatsa: "They were formerly more numerous, but the small pox has made its ravages among them. These people deposit their dead in the same manner as the Mandans, but at a greater distance from their villages." (Le Raye, pp. 183–184.) The distance of the scaffolds from the villages was told by Bradbury, who visited the Hidatsa just nine years after Le Raye. He told of arriving on the river bank "opposite to the third village of the *Minetaree*, or *Gros Ventres Indians*, as the night was closing in. On hallooing, some Indians came down to the bank of the river opposite to us, and immediately ran back to the village. In a few minutes we saw them returning along with six squaws, each of whom had a skin canoe on her back, and paddle in her hand." (Bradbury, p. 139.) Thus they were ferried across the river, they and their saddles in the bull boats and the Indians driving the horses. The squaws received "three balls and three loads of powder for each man, being the price of ferriage." On June 24, 1811, Bradbury, being at the Hidatsa village, wrote: "passed through a small wood, where I discovered a stage constructed betwixt four trees, standing very near each other, and to which the stage was attached, about ten feet from the ground. On this stage was laid the body of an Indian, wrapt in a buffalo robe. As the stage was very narrow, I could see all that was upon it without much trouble. It was the body of a man, and beside it there lay a bow and quiver with arrows, a tomahawk, and a scalping knife. There were a great number of stages erected about a quarter of a mile from the village, on which the dead bodies were deposited, which, for fear of giving offence, I avoided; as I found, that al-

though it is the custom of these people thus to expose the dead bodies of their ancestors, yet they have in a very high degree that veneration for their remains which is a characteristic of the American Indians."

It is interesting to know that scaffolds for the dead were erected in the midst of the timber, "a small wood," and evidently the bodies were placed in the branches of trees. However, the latter may not have been of sufficient size to have sustained the weight and bulk.

When the Hidatsa were visited by Maximilian, during the year 1833, they were living on the banks of Knife River, a few miles distant from the Mandan villages. He described the burial customs of the two tribes as being similar, as already mentioned, but later referred to the Hidatsa and told how "The Manitaries always lay their dead upon stages or scaffolds. As the lord of life is displeased when they quarrel and kill each other, those who do so are buried in the earth, that they may be no longer seen. In this case a buffalo's head is laid upon the grave, in order that the buffalo herds may not keep away, for, if they were to smell the wicked, they might remove and never return. The good are laid upon stages, that they may be seen by the lord of life." (Maximilian, pp. 404–405.)

Many Hidatsa removed from their old habitat on Knife River about the year 1845 to the vicinity of Fort Berthold, on the bank of the Missouri some 60 miles above the site of old Fort Clark. Culbertson stopped at the new village on June 13, 1850, and observed that "on the plane near the fort is the burying place, studded with many scaffolds on which the dead are placed, and also many graves in which they have been buried. Many of the scaffolds were partly broken down and had deposited their burdens on the ground where they lay exposed unsightly and forbidding. A number of skulls were kicking about the ground." (Culbertson, p. 118.) And three years later, on October 9, 1853, another party "arrived at Fort Berthold about sunset," and received many "visits from the Gros Ventres." The earth lodges were described, and the journal continues: "These Indians, in common with some other tribes, have a peculiar method of disposing of the bodies of their dead. They are placed upon a scaffold six or eight feet above the ground, enveloped in all the blankets, robes, &c., which belonged to them when alive, with a supply of food, arrows, moccasins, &c., for the use of the deceased in the happy hunting-grounds. The last resting-place of the Indian is as sacred to his friends as the white man's tomb, and whoever should disturb it in any way would expose himself to an Indian's vengeance." (Saxton, pp. 263–268.)

Several sketches made by Kurz at and near Fort Berthold are reproduced in Plate 29. A part of the interior of the fort shows

the magazine, the open gate, and the Missouri River beyond. A scaffold burial of a Mandan, made near the fort, is one of the interesting drawings.

Morgan visited the village of the Hidatsa and Mandan at Fort Berthold during his trip through the Upper Missouri Valley in 1862, and fortunately left an interesting, though brief, account of the burials in the vicinity of the settlement. He referred to the village and said in part: It "is situated upon a bluff at a bend in the river in a situation precisely similar to that of the old Mandan village, but upon the north-east side of the Missouri. It contains about the same number of houses, of the same design, and is surrounded, except on the bluff, with a wall of wooden pickets set close together vertically in the ground, and rising to a height of ten or twelve feet, with two or three gateways or openings." The groups of burials were evidently some distance away from the village, on the open prairie. His narrative continued: "Back of the village, about half a mile in the prairie, was the field of scaffolds. They were thickly studded together, about two hundred in number, and some of them containing more bodies than one. Four posts or poles are set in the ground, about eight feet high, with stringers and cross pieces resting in forks, upon which a flooring of smaller poles is placed, all of which are secured with raw hide strings. This is covered with a buffalo robe. The body dressed and painted, and wrapped in blankets, red or blue, is then placed upon the scaffold and lashed to it with strips of raw hide. One partially uncovered, showed the head resting on a pillow, the arms crossed on the breast, and a pipe of catlinite with a long wooden stem, laid by his right side, resting on the shoulder. At the foot of the body was a detached bundle . . . lashed to the scaffold." (Morgan, p. 45.)

In the year 1877 the three tribes, Hidatsa, Mandan, and Arikara, occupied an extensive and permanent village in the vicinity of Fort Berthold, on the bank of the Missouri River. The village consisted of many earth lodges, the older form of structures, but there were numerous cabins similar to those erected by the pioneers from the East. At that time (1877) Matthews wrote: "On the prairie, a short distance behind the village, are scattered around the scaffolds and the graves whereon and wherein are deposited the dead. Formerly, all who died in the village were placed on scaffolds, as is the custom with most of the Missouri Valley tribes; but the practice of burying in the ground, after the manner of the Europeans and Arickarees, is gradually becoming more common; and every year the scaffolds decrease, and the graves increase in number. When at a distance from their village on their hunts, if encamped in the neighborhood of timber, they lay the corpses in the branches of the trees instead of building scaffolds." (Matthews, p. 9.) The

preceding notes evidently referred to the three tribes, but it is doubtful if any scaffolds were erected by the Arikara. Now writing about the Hidatsa in particular, Matthews continued: "Their faith concerning a future life is this: When a Hidatsa dies, his shade lingers four nights around the camp or village in which he died, and then goes to the lodge of his departed kindred in the Village of the Dead. When he has arrived there, he is rewarded for his valor, self-denial, and ambition on earth by receiving the same regard in the one place as in the other; for there, as here, the brave man is honored and the coward despised. Some say that the ghosts of those who commit suicide occupy a separate part of the village, but that their condition differs in no wise from that of the others. In the next world, human shades hunt and live on the shades of buffalo and other animals that have here died. There too there are four seasons, but they come in an inverse order to the terrestrial seasons. During the four nights that the ghost is supposed to linger near his former dwelling, those who disliked or feared the deceased, and do not wish a visit from the shade, scorch with red coals a pair of moccasins, which they leave at the door of the lodge. The smell of the burning leather, they claim, keeps the ghosts out; but the true friends of the dead man take no such precautions." And "they believe in the existence and visibility of human and other ghosts, yet they seem to have no terror of graveyards and but little of mortuary remains." (Op. cit., p. 49.)

Another account, referring to the same people in the same village, was prepared about this time. It will serve to supplement the notes by Doctor Matthews, previously quoted. The account was prepared by E. H. Alden, Indian agent at Fort Berthold, and states that "The Gros Ventres and Mandans never bury in the ground, but always on a scaffold made of four posts about eight feet high, on which the box is placed, or, if no box is used, the body wrapped in red or blue cloth if able, or, if not, a blanket or cheapest white cloth, the tools and weapons being placed directly under the body, and there they remain forever, no Indian ever daring to touch one of them. It would be bad medicine to touch the dead or anything so placed belonging to him. Should the body by any means fall to the ground, it is never touched or replaced on the scaffold. As soon as one dies he is immediately buried, sometimes within an hour, and the friends begin howling and wailing as the process of interment goes on, and continue mourning day and night around the grave, without food sometimes three or four days. Those who mourn are always paid for it in some way by the other friends of the deceased, and those who mourn the longest are paid the most. They also show their grief and affection for the dead by a fearful cutting of their own

bodies, sometimes only in part, and sometimes all over their whole flesh, and this sometimes continues for weeks. Their hair, which is worn in long braids, is also cut off to show their mourning. They seem proud of their mutilations. A young man who had just buried his mother came in boasting of, and showing his mangled legs." (Yarrow, p. 161.)

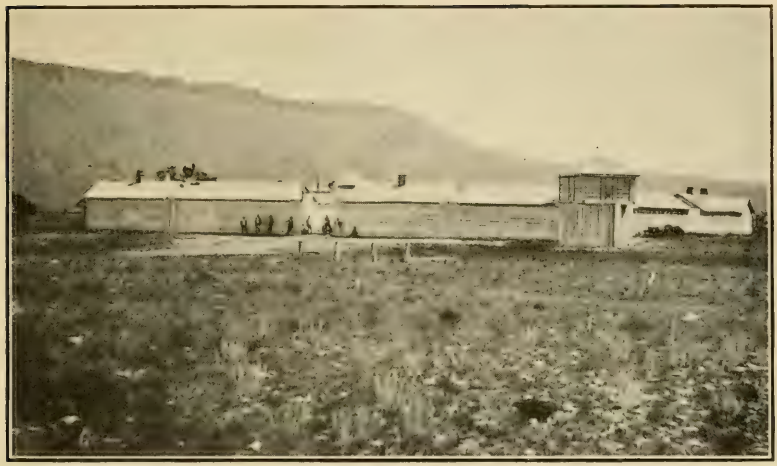
CROWS

It is evident the common form of burial among the Crows, as among the kindred Hidatsa, was to place the body, porperly wrapped, upon a scaffold erected some feet above the ground. Photographs made in the vicinity of the Crow Agency which stood on the Yellowstone, near Shields River, during the summer of 1871, show the large scaffolds on which were placed two or more bodies. This custom of putting more than one body on a scaffold seems to have been contrary to the general practice of the people farther down the Missouri. The photograph is reproduced in Plate 30, *b*, and a view of the agency buildings, which were destroyed by fire October 30, 1872, is shown in Plate 30, *a*.

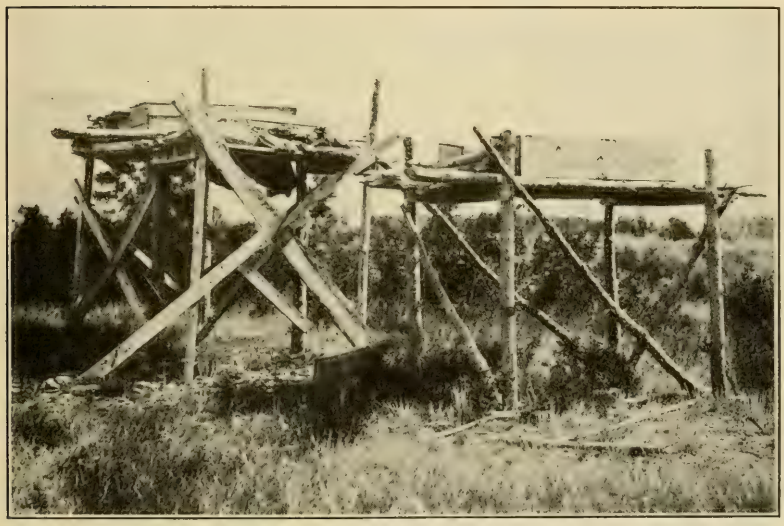
The Crows expressed their grief by cutting and gashing their bodies, but probably to no greater extent than did other tribes of the Missouri Valley. One account states that "Long Hair cut off a large roll of his hair; a thing he was never known to do before." (Beckwourth, p. 223.)

Photographs of various forms of Crow burials, as they appeared between 30 and 40 years ago, are shown in Plates 31, 33, 34, and 35. These represent the scaffold burials soon after death and the graves in which the bones were placed after the scaffolds had fallen through decay. A photograph of the old Crow, Iron Bull, is shown in Plate 32, and his grave in Plate 31, *b*. He died in 1884 and probably his body was first placed upon a scaffold, there to remain some months until it fell to the ground, after which the bones were collected and deposited in the grave.

It is evident that under certain conditions the Crows placed the remains of their dead in tipis, a custom which has already been noted among the Oglala. A remarkable example of this form of burial was witnessed by Col. P. W. Norris in 1876, and was given by Yarrow. (Op. cit., p. 153.) It reads: "The lodge poles inclosed an oblong circle some 18 by 22 feet at the base, converging to a point at least 30 feet high, covered with buffalo-hides dressed without hair except a part of the tail switch, which floats outside like, and mingled with human scalps. The different skins are neatly fitted and sewed together with sinew, and all painted in seven alternate horizontal stripes of brown and yellow, decorated with various life-like war



a. CROW AGENCY ON THE YELLOWSTONE, NEAR SHIELDS RIVER. DESTROYED BY FIRE, OCTOBER 30, 1872



b. CROW BURIALS AT THE OLD AGENCY ON THE YELLOWSTONE, NEAR SHIELDS RIVER

Photographs by W. H. Jackson, 1871

a. Scaffold burial of Chief Crazy Wolf. Prando

b. The distant grave is that of Chief Iron Bull, died 1884. Prando

CROW BURIALS NEAR THE CROW AGENCY

IRON BULL

a. On the surface

b. Scaffold

CROW BURIALS NEAR THE CROW AGENCY

a. Lodge removed and poles placed beneath scaffold

b. Scaffold and death lodge

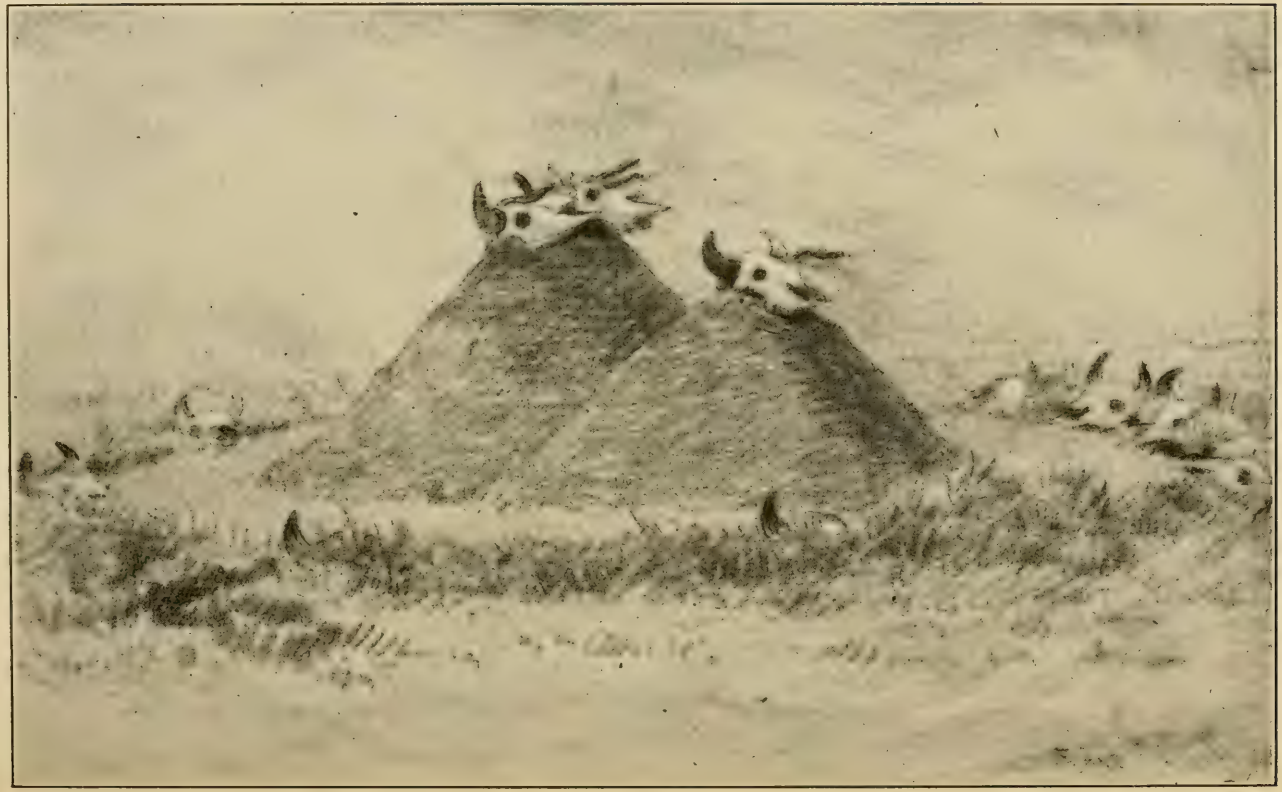
BURIAL OF CROW CHIEF TEN BEAR AT THE CROW AGENCY

a. TREE BURIAL NEAR FORT KEOGH, MONT.

b. BODY OF CHILD WRAPPED AND IN CROTCH OF TREE ON BANK OF THE BIG HORN

Photograph by P. P. Prando

PAWNEE CEMETERY. MOUNDS OF SOD AND EARTH OVER THE GRAVES



ARIKARA GRAVES AT FORT CLARK

Sketch by Carl Wimar, June 25, 1859

scenes. Over the small entrance is a large bright cross, the upright being a large stuffed white wolf-skin upon his war lance, and the cross-bar of bright scarlet flannel, containing the quiver of bow and arrows, which nearly all warriors still carry, even when armed with repeating rifles. As the cross is not a pagan but a Christian (which Long Hair was not either by profession or practice) emblem, it was probably placed there by the influence of some of his white friends. I entered, finding Long Horse buried Indian fashion, in full war dress, paint and feathers, in a rude coffin, upon a platform about breast high, decorated with weapons, scalps, and ornaments. A large opening and wind-flap at the top favored ventilation, and though he had lain there in an open coffin a full month, some of which was hot weather, there was but little effluvia; in fact, I have seldom found much in a burial-teepee, and when this mode of burial is thus performed it is less repulsive than natural to suppose."

CADDOAN TRIBES

The more important tribes of this group, the Pawnee and Arikara, were discovered by the early explorers occupying permanent villages of earth lodges. The former were some miles west of the Missouri on the banks of the Platte, but the settlements of the latter were on the islands and along the banks of the Missouri. However, it is quite evident they were a southern people who had arrived in the northern country only after a movement which had extended through many generations. The Wichita, considered as a kindred tribe, had not advanced beyond the northern limits of the present State of Kansas, and others had remained even farther southward, in the valley of Red River of Louisiana, and in southwestern Arkansas and eastern Texas. But whether all these widely separated tribes should actually be considered as belonging to the same linguistic group has not been definitely determined, although at this time they are regarded as constituting the Caddoan group.

Pawnee

The Pawnee, whose large villages of earth-covered lodges stood in eastern Nebraska, west of the Missouri, buried their dead in excavated graves. According to Francis La Flesche the bodies were placed in the graves in a sitting position, which would conform with the known customs of other tribes of the Missouri Valley. Small, low mounds of earth evidently surmounted the graves, which were probably similar in every respect to those of the kindred Arikara. The groups of small mounds, the cemeteries belonging to the several villages, were evidently situated on high ground some distance from

the lodges. In the summer of 1833 the Pawnee towns were visited by an official party, accompanied by J. T. Irving and others. Irving's narrative is most interesting. The night spent at the Republican Pawnee village, he walked "along the high bluff, looking down upon the Platte, which was dimly seen, reflecting the stars that twinkled upon its restless waters . . . We strolled along the bank for half a mile . . . At length, however, we turned for the purpose of retracing our steps, when our attention was attracted by a low, mournful cry, from the midst of a number of small mounds, at a short distance, the burial ground of the village. We approached the spot so cautiously, as not to disturb the person who was stationed there. Upon the top of one of the graves, a large mound covered with grass, was lying an Indian girl . . . Believing that she was some female belonging to the tribe, singing a dirge over the grave of some departed friend, we listened attentively to her song. At one moment, it would rise in the air with a plaintive sound, as if she was dwelling with mournful tenderness upon the virtues of the deceased." (Irving, J. T., II, pp. 102–105.) The graves were undoubtedly similar in appearance to those shown in the very remarkable old photograph which is now reproduced in Plate 36. The low mounds of earth in the photograph resemble heaps of sod rather than mounds of earth. And they were probably constructed of sod, otherwise they could not have been so steep and would not have been so rough and irregular. Certainly a most interesting and valuable picture, made half a century ago, and according to La Flesche made near the great Pawnee village then standing on the banks of the Platte. These small mounds of earth and sod were probably similar to the graves sketched by Wimar at the Arikara village some years before. The latter are shown in Plate 37.

Caches in which various articles and supplies were preserved were constructed by the Pawnee in or near their lodges, and it is of interest to find a reference to the caches having served as burial places for the dead killed at the time of an attack on the village by a band of Sioux warriors. The fight occurred in June, 1845, at which time: "the Pawnees were so badly frightened they threw their dead into corn caches and heads of ravines, covered them lightly, picked up some of their traps and left some in their lodges, crossed the river and went about three miles that night." (Allis, p. 155.) Human remains have been encountered in caches in the Ohio Valley and elsewhere, and probably all such burials were made when the living were hard pressed, or when it would have been extremely difficult if not impossible to have excavated graves in the usual manner.

Dunbar, while among the Pawnee, witnessed the manner of treating a man who had been frightfully burned in a prairie fire. "The wives of the sick man showed their affection by preparing food for

him, and urging him to eat . . . They were also very attentive to give him drink, whenever he wanted, and to change his position when he desired it. Twice each day this dying man was carried out into the open air, as soon as it was light in the morning, and twilight in the evening." And the narrative continues: "Early the next morning, two of their physicians called to see the sick man. In the first place, they sat down and smoked, which was done with many ceremonies." The various ceremonies were described in detail. The visits of the two were repeated twice each day, and just before the death of the sufferer they were hastily called, when "They came and with redoubled fury repeated their savage, foolish, and fiendish actions." Then "as soon as the man was dead, his wives, children, and relatives broke out in the most doleful lamentations. His wives were particularly vociferous in their grief, venting their sorrow at the highest pitch of the voices, wringing their hands, beating their breasts, dishevelling their hair, letting it hang down over their faces, covering themselves entirely with their robes, together with many other expressions of savage grief. As soon as it was light, the dead man was taken out and buried. His wives and friends followed, loudly howling, and weeping to the grave lamenting their loss. When they came into the lodge, they covered themselves entirely with their robes, and set mourning in silence." (Dunbar, pp. 600–602.) The entry in the journal from which the preceding notes were quoted was dated October 25, 1834, two days before the village started on their winter hunt. They advanced over the prairie, often being a line 4 miles or more in length, when "the women, boys, and girls led each of them a horse, and walk in the trail before them." The buffalo were discovered and many were killed. A camp was established where they were to remain some days preparing meat, and while there, during the latter part of November, the missionary wrote in his journal: "One cold morning as I was returning from my walk, I saw several women, bearing the lifeless remains of a little child, that had died the preceding night, to its burial. They carried it a short distance, then placed it on the ground, stopped and wept awhile, then took it up and went forward, all the while howling sadly. The father, a young man, followed at a little distance, apparently, in an agony of grief. Though it was very cold, the ground being covered with snow and ice, he wore no clothing, save the indispensable garment. In this condition, he remained weeping at the grave, probably two hours, perhaps more. I should have thought, he would have frozen to death in this time, but his mind seemed to be so much absorbed in his grief, that he did not appear, at all, to regard the cold." (Op. cit., p. 605.)

The Pawnee mourned for their dead, as did other tribes, but they had one quite unusual custom, as was witnessed by the English traveler Murray late in the year 1835. During the summer and autumn he had been with the Pawnee in one of the camps, not at their permanent earth lodge village, and later attempted to return to Fort Leavenworth, but soon after leaving the Pawnee he met with an accident and was thus compelled to retrace his way to the native encampment. He passed the site of the Pawnee camp of the preceding night and there encountered "Two small circular lodges, the apertures to which were closed, and from which proceeded the low wailing chant of Indian mourning." He then continued: "This I observed to be a common custom among the Pawnees. After the rest of the village had been for several hours on the march, a mourning family would remain behind and sing this melancholy kind of dirge. I should think that it must be a very dangerous mode of lamentation while in these remote excursions; because, if any hostile war-party was hovering on the Pawnee trail, they would inevitably fall victims to the pursuers. But this risk may be the very reason for its being esteemed so great a tribute to the dead; or, possibly, they may trust to the distant out-posts of well-mounted warriors, with which the Pawnees always secure their rear and flanks. The duration of mourning among this tribe seems very unfixed; the widow always mourns a year for her husband; but I have sometimes seen squaws moaning and chanting in the evening at a little distance from camp; and, on inquiry, have learnt that they were mourning for a relative, who had been some years dead." (Murray, I, p. 439.)

Men are said to have expressed their grief by other means. It was their custom to "cut their hair close, except a tuft on the top, which they suffer to remain, and which they plait as a valued ornament, the removal of which is disgraceful. In seasons of mourning, however, they make the sacrifice, to express their grief." (Morse, p. 239.)

Arikara

The Arikara, once closely united with the Pawnee, from whom they separated generations ago, occupied villages of earth-covered lodges, the ruins of which were recognized by the earliest explorers who ascended the Missouri. Evidently the tribe did not remain long at any one site. In the year 1837 a great epidemic of smallpox swept through the upper valley of the Missouri. The Mandan, whose great villages stood near Fort Clark, suffered greatly and few members of the tribe survived, and those who escaped the dreaded disease abandoned the site and removed to dwell nearer the Hidasta.

About this time the Arikara moved and took possession of the deserted village of the Mandan, and there remained until midsummer of 1862, when they again moved up the Missouri to the vicinity of Fort Berthold.

Culbertson arrived at Fort Clark June 12, 1850. At that time the Arikara village—the old Mandan site—was prosperous and flourishing. He visited the village, and when returning, so he wrote in his journal: "On passing to the fort, I observed a great number of hillocks, scattered over the prairie, and these, I was told, are graves, this people having abandoned the old method of scaffolding their dead." (Culbertson, p. 117.)

During the summer of 1859 Carl Wimar, the artist, whose home was in St. Louis, visited the upper Missouri for the purpose of sketching the Indian in his native environment. Although he had made many excursions among the Indians of the then far West, this proved one of his most interesting journeys. On June 25 of that year he was at Fort Clark, near which post stood the old village of the Mandan, but which at that time was occupied by the Arikara. A sketch made at that time now proves of the greatest interest and value. It shows two graves of the Arikara, evidently the same as were mentioned three years later by Morgan. Writing of his visit to the Arikara village at Fort Clark in 1862, Morgan said in part:

"The Arickarees buried their dead in the ground, and in a sitting posture, judging from the form and size of the mounds. Just back of the village upon the open prairie, was a long row of these mounds quite near together. There were several hundred of them forming a segment of a great circle apparently a mile in length. They were about three feet high, seven feet long, and five feet wide at the level of the ground. Other mounds were grouped together. The most conspicuous mound was that of an Arickaree chief killed by the Sioux a few years before. It was somewhat larger than the others, with a smaller mound, probably that of a relative intersecting it. Around the two, the sod had been removed for the space of five feet, thus forming an area fifteen or more feet in diameter, with a floor of bare earth, the mounds being in the centre. On the top of the mound over the chief's grave, were two bull buffalo skulls, side and side, their horns wound with strips of red flannel and the forehead of one spotted with vermilion. The outer border of the cleared area was decorated with seventeen buffalo skulls, occupying about two-thirds of the circuit, and enclosing the grave of the chief. With what religious motive these skulls were used in their burial customs was not ascertained." (Morgan, pp. 44–45.) The description by Morgan applies perfectly to the sketch made by Wimar three years before, which is reproduced in Plate 37. The

two mounds, the surrounding cleared area, and the encircling row of buffalo skulls are clearly shown. Two skulls remained on the top of the larger grave in 1862 but it is evident the single skull which had been placed on the smaller mound had fallen away and had not been replaced. Wimar indicated the bits of red cloth attached to the horns of the three skulls resting upon the graves, as mentioned by Morgan.

M. W. Stirling, during the month of June, 1923, examined four ancient village sites, all of which were within "the 12-mile strip between Grand River and Elk Creek, South Dakota," on the banks of the Missouri. "Three of these, on the west bank of the Missouri, were identified as Arikara; one being the historic upper village of the Arikara visited by Lewis and Clark in 1804 and later by Brackenridge and Bradbury in 1811." The remaining two sites were probably occupied during the preceding century. In the cemeteries belonging to the three villages the bodies had been buried in excavated graves, and it is highly probable that small, low mounds had formerly stood over them, but all traces of such elevations have disappeared. Much interesting material was recovered from the sites, including objects which may have been secured from Europeans two centuries or more ago. (Stirling, p. 66.) The entire region should be carefully examined while the sites may still be identified.

The discovery of a large variety of objects, some of European and others of native origin, in graves known to have been made by the Arikara, suggests an observation made by Maximilian in 1833. He wrote in part: "The Arikkaras affirm that God said to them that they were made of earth, and must return to earth; on which account they bury their dead in the ground. Various things are sometimes cast into the grave of eminent men; the corpse is dressed in the best clothes, the face painted red, and sometimes a good horse is killed on the grave. If the deceased has left a son, he receives his father's medicine apparatus; if not, it is buried with him in the grave." (Maximilian, p. 411.)

Wichita

The Wichita was among the first of the plains tribes encountered by Europeans, the Quivira of the Spanish narratives of the Coronado expedition. During the year 1541 they were occupying villages located in the eastern part of the present State of Kansas, on the edge of the vast prairies over which then roamed innumerable herds of buffalo. They constructed a curious form of habitation, a conical thatched structure, well suited to the region. They at once suggest a modified form of the earth lodge of the Pawnee, both being of circular base, the walls sloping downward from an opening at the center of the top. The Wichita and Pawnee are related linguistically, and possibly

generations ago were even more closely allied. The two types of habitations may have had a common origin. Both tribes buried their dead in prepared graves. A brief account of the rites and customs of the Wichita was prepared by Dr. Fordyce Grinnell before the year 1879. This now proves of much interest. It is told how, "When a Wichita dies the towncrier goes up and down through the village and announces the fact. Preparations are immediately made for the burial, and the body is taken without delay to the grave prepared for its reception. If the grave is some distance from the village, the body is carried thither on the back of a pony, being first wrapped in blankets and then laid prone across the saddle, one person walking on either side to support it. The grave is dug from three to four feet deep and of sufficient length for the extended body. First blankets and buffalo-robes are laid in the bottom of the grave, then the body, being taken from the horse and unwrapped, is dressed in its best apparel and with ornaments is placed upon a couch of blankets and robes, with the head towards the west and the feet to the east; the valuables belonging to the deceased are placed with the body in the grave. With the man are deposited his bows and arrows or gun, and with the woman her cooking utensils and other implements of her toil. Over the body sticks are placed six or eight inches deep and grass over these, so that when the earth is filled in, it need not come in contact with the body or its trappings. After the grave is filled with earth, a pen of poles is built around it, or, as is frequently the case, stakes are driven so that they cross each other from either side about midway over the grave, thus forming a complete protection from the invasion of wild animals. After all this is done, the grass . . . is carefully scraped from about the grave for several feet, so that the ground is left smooth and clean. It is seldom the case that the relatives accompany the remains to the grave, but they more often employ others to bury the body for them, usually women. Mourning is similar in this tribe as in others, and it consists in cutting off the hair, fasting, &c. Horses are also killed at the grave." (Yarrow, pp. 102–103.)

The graves were probably grouped in the vicinity of the village, similar to the cemeteries of the Pawnee. And like the latter the graves of the dead were undoubtedly visited by the mourners who would "cry," and lament their loss.

CONCLUSION

Unfortunately comparatively few references have been found to the various ceremonies which were probably enacted in connection with the burial of the dead by the scattered Algonquian, Siouan, and Caddoan tribes of the West. And, as was previously mentioned,

it is quite evident that such scenes were seldom witnessed by persons who were prepared to record what transpired, consequently printed records are scarce. However, sufficient information has been gathered from the many narratives and reports of journeys through the Indian country, of a half century and more ago, to convey an idea of the strange customs of the people who occupied the upper Missouri Valley and adjacent regions at that time. Customs were quite varied and distinct forms of burial were practiced by different tribes, governed by the natural environments and ways of life of the people. Whether occupants of a densely forested region or of the open prairie country, whether a sedentary people or a group of hunters, were factors which determined not only the form of habitations which they were able to construct and occupy but also the manner in which they disposed of their dead. This has been shown in the preceding pages.

But these scattered references, brought together to explain the actual manner of disposing of the dead and not attempting to discover the significance of the various rites which were enacted at the time of death and burial, treat of the customs and practices of the tribes who occupied the country during historic times. However, other burials encountered within the same wide region belong to an earlier period, when the inhabitants of the land possessed different manners and ways of life. To this earlier period belong the majority of mounds found in various localities, and many of these ancient works, when examined, reveal different forms of burials. Some were undoubtedly erected by members of tribes encountered by Europeans who first entered the country; others are much older and the identity of their builders may never be disclosed.

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EXPLANATION OF PLATES

Plate 1

Painted by DeLancey Gill from a photograph by D. I. Bushnell, jr., made at the Ojibway village of Sagawamick. The village stood on the south shore of Mille Lac, Minn., and was visited during May and June, 1900. This occupied the site of an ancient Sioux settlement which was probably occupied when Father Louis Hennepin was a captive only a few miles southward, in 1680. A large group of burial mounds marked the position of the ancient village. These had been erected by the Sioux and several of them were, in 1900, used by the Ojibway as places of burial for their dead. One of the latter mounds, which stood very near the lake shore, is shown in the picture. This is a very interesting example of the use of ancient mounds by later people, and readily accounts for the discovery of comparatively modern burials in the upper strata of many mounds throughout the Mississippi Valley.

Plate 2

Reproduction of an original photograph made by Humphrey Lloyd Hime, on the banks of Red River, in 1858. Hime accompanied Henry Youle Hind as photographer on the Assiniboin and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition and made many interesting negatives, including those which are now reproduced. Copy of the original photograph is in the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Plate 3

Same history as Plate 2.

Plate 4

A cemetery at the ancient Ojibway village on the shore of Red Lake, Minn. The photograph was made by Rev. J. A. Gilfillan about 1895.

Plate 5

This is a beautiful photograph of a tree burial of the Southern Cheyenne and was made by the late James Mooney in 1891, near the South Canadian River, Okla. The original negative is in the Bureau of American Ethnology.

Plate 6

Same as Plate 5.

Plate 7

This shows the travois basket as it is now exhibited at the United States National Museum. The human remains which were in the various wrappings were removed and are now in the Army Medical Museum.

PLATE 8

The photograph of which this is a reproduction is in the collection of the United States National Museum, but unfortunately its history is not known.

PLATE 9

The original sketch from which this painting was made was probably done by Eastman while he was stationed at Fort Snelling.

Seth Eastman, born in Brunswick, Me., January 24, 1808; died in Washington, D. C., August 31, 1875.

PLATE 10

Samuel Seymour accompanied the Long party "as painter for the expedition." He is known to have made a large number of sketches and more finished pictures during the trip, a few of which were reproduced in the American and English editions of the Narrative.

PLATE 11

One of the beautiful pictures made by Bodmer while he was associated with Maximilian, Prince of Wied. Reproduced in the account of their Travels in America in 1833–34.

Karl Bodmer, born in Zurich, Switzerland, 1805; died 1894.

PLATE 12

Photograph of Fort Laramie, made during the visit of the Indian Peace Commission in 1868. From original in possession of Mrs. N. H. Beauregard, St. Louis. Name of the photographer not known.

PLATE 13

Brown's Hotel at Fort Laramie. Same history as Plate 12.

PLATE 14

a. Tree burial. Same history as Plate 12. *b*, Tree burial. Same history as Plate 12.

PLATE 15

Scaffold-tree burial. This very interesting old photograph is in the collection of the United States National Museum, but unfortunately it is not known when nor by whom it was made. However, it was probably made in the vicinity of Fort Laramie.

PLATE 16

This interesting and graphic sketch was made by Miss Alice C. Fletcher during the autumn of 1881. At that time Miss Fletcher was making her first trip into the Indian country of the upper Missouri, the beginning of a remarkable career.

PLATE 17

Same history as Plate 11.

PLATE 18

a. This is probably a very accurate portrait of the great missionary and friend of the Indians, Père de Smet. Made by the young Swiss artist Friedrich

Kurz, by whom he was met on board the steamboat *St. Ange*, bound for the upper Missouri. Père de Smet had left St. Louis June 7, 1851, went to Fort Union, and from there continued overland to Fort Laramie, where he attended the great gathering of Indians during the month of September.

b. Original drawing by Kurz.

Friedrich Kurz, born in Berne, Switzerland, January 8, 1818; died 1871.

PLATE 19

a. Exterior of Fort Union.

b. Interior of Fort Union.

Original drawings made by Kurz in 1851. Kurz, when referring to the distance of Fort Union from Fort Berthold, wrote: "By land, the distance, as the crow flies, is about 170 miles, by the river route, more than twice as far." Kurz left Fort Berthold September 1, 1851, on horseback, and reached Fort Union four days later. On September 15, 1851, he mentioned Fort Union in his journal, and said: "The palisades of this Fort are not driven into the ground, as in Fort Berthold, but are fitted into heavy beams that rest upon a foundation of limestone. At this place palisades are further secured by supports of crossed beams on the inside, so that they cannot be blown down by the wind. Nevertheless, it happened once during my stay that on the western side, where the supports were badly decayed, a violent wind did force them down before the new beams were ready." And "here the Assiniboins, Crows, Crees, and half-breeds do their trading; and besides, Fort Union is the depot or storage-house for the more distant posts,—Fort Benton and Fort Alexander."

PLATE 20

Reproduction of a page of Kurz's sketchbook, showing studies, portraits, etc., made at different times.

PLATE 21

a. Blackbird's grave, from the original painting by Catlin now in the collection of the United States National Museum. This is No. 364 in Catlin's Catalogue (London, 1848), and is described as: "View on Upper Missouri—the 'Blackbird's Grave.' Where 'Blackbird,' Chief of the Omahas, was buried on his favorite war-horse, which was alive; 1,100 miles above St. Louis."

George Catlin, born in Wilkesbarre, Pa., 1796; died in Jersey City, N. J., December 23, 1872.

b. Photograph looking from the Blackbird Hills, by William H. Jackson, 1871.

PLATE 22

Blackbird's grave, looking up from the banks of the Missouri, sketched by Bodmer, 1833.

Same history as Plate 11.

A "Biography of Blackbird" appears in the Gazetteer of the State of Missouri, by Alphonso Wetmore. St. Louis, 1837. Pp. 299–305.

PLATE 23

From a photograph in the Bureau of American Ethnology. History not known.

PLATE 24

Two forms of Ponca burials are shown. The original photographs are in the collection of the Bureau of American Ethnology, but their history is not known.

PLATE 25

a. Photograph kindly furnished by Francis La Flesche. This was made within the past 10 years.

b. Photograph made by David I. Bushnell, jr., about 1896.

PLATE 26

a. Reproduction of the original painting by Catlin now in the United States National Museum. It is No. 392 in the Catlin Catalogue, described as "View on Upper Missouri—Back view of the Mandan Village, showing their mode of depositing their dead, on scaffolds, enveloped in skins, and of preserving and feeding the skulls; 1,800 miles above St. Louis. Women feeding the skulls of their relatives with dishes of meat." A drawing, made by Catlin from the original painting, appeared as Plate 48, page 89, in the first volume of his Letters and Notes, London, 1841.

b. From the original painting by Catlin preserved in the United States National Museum. This is No. 475 in the Catlin Catalogue, and is designated: "*Butte de Mort*, Upper Missouri, a great burial-place of the Sioux, called by the French *Butte de Mort*, Hill of Death.

"Regarded by the Indians with great dread and superstition. There are several thousand buffalo and human skulls, perfectly bleached and curiously arranged about it."

PLATE 27

Mandan shrine. Same history as Plate 11.

PLATE 28

A water-color sketch by Kurz. This shows Fort Berthold, on a cliff above the waters of the Missouri, and in the immediate foreground Kurz and his horse are standing within a circle of buffalo and human skulls.

PLATE 29

a. A page of Kurz's Sketchbook, showing a part of the interior of Fort Berthold, and above, a sweat house, probably erected by the Assiniboin, near the fort. The date of the latter sketch is August 24, 1851. A brief reference to conditions prevailing at Fort Berthold, as recorded by Kurz in his journal, is of interest. He wrote about the middle of September, 1851: "Fort Berthold, which is, really, under control of Fort Pierre, is not a trading-post of much consequence; trade is carried on with only one tribe and, moreover, business is done, for the most part on credit, which frequently results in loss."

b. Page from Kurz's Sketchbook.

PLATE 30

a. Photograph of the Crow Agency, on the Yellowstone near Shields River, destroyed by fire October 30, 1872. In the Descriptive Catalogue of Photographs of North American Indians, by W. H. Jackson, Washington, 1877, the photograph was mentioned on page 31. "The old mission buildings (lately destroyed by fire), in which the agent had his headquarters."

Photograph by W. H. Jackson, 1871; negative now in the Bureau of American Ethnology.

b. Crow burials near the old agency. History same as preceding.

PLATE 31

a. Scaffold holding the body of the Crow Chief Crazy Wolf. Near the Crow Agency, Mont. Photograph by P. P. Prando about 1890.

b. Group of Crow burials near the agency. The bones were buried after the original scaffolds, upon which the bodies had been placed soon after death, had fallen through decay. The distant grave was that of the old Crow Chief Iron Bull who died in 1884. Photograph by P. P. Prando.

PLATE 32

Photograph of the Crow Chief Iron Bull and squaw. This was made in Washington, D. C., during the year 1872. Iron Bull's grave is shown in the preceding plate.

PLATE 33

Crow burials near the agency.

PLATE 34

Burial of the Crow Chief Ten Bear at the Crow Agency, Mont.

a. The lodge having been taken down, the poles were placed beneath the scaffold, and evidently the lodge covering had been wrapped over the remains on the scaffold.

b. Scaffold and "death lodge."

PLATE 35

Crow burials.

a. Tree burial near Fort Keogh, Mont. History of photograph not known.

b. Body of a child wrapped and placed among the branches of a tree, near the banks of the Big Horn. Photograph by P. P. Prando.

PLATE 36

It is not known when this remarkable photograph was made, but it is believed to show a cemetery which belonged to one of the Pawnee villages in Nebraska 50 years or more ago. The copy formerly belonged to Miss Alice C. Fletcher and was furnished for reproduction by Dr. Francis La Flesche.

PLATE 37

A crayon sketch by Carl Wimar, made at Fort Clark, on the upper Missouri, June 25, 1859. Size 9½ by 15 inches. Collection of David I. Bushnell, jr.

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